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W A L K S

IN

A FOREST.

W. A. L. K. 2

A. R. O. N. T.

344
WALKS IN A FOREST: 9

OR,

P O E M S

DESCRIPTIVE OF SCENERY AND INCIDENTS
CHARACTERISTIC OF
A FOREST,

AT DIFFERENT SEASONS OF THE YEAR.

BY THOMAS GISBORNE, M. A. K

THE SECOND EDITION, CORRECTED AND ENLARGED.

Poeticæ propositum aut duplex, aut ex duobus alterum, vulgo statuitur; nimirum aut Prodesse, aut Delectare, aut etiam Utrumque. Mallem equidem Utilitatem solummodo, quasi ultimum ejus finem, statuissem; Delectationem vero, quasi rationem & viam, per quam ad istum finem unice perveniret: ita ut judicaretur Prodesse Delectando.

LOWTH, De Sacra Poesi Hebræorum.

L O N D O N :

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1796. 17



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TO THE
REV. WILLIAM MASON,
OF ASTON, YORKSHIRE,

THE FOLLOWING
P O E M S

ARE INSCRIBED

BY HIS OBLIGED AND

AFFECTIONATE FRIEND,

THE AUTHOR.

P R E F A C E.

THE scenes and incidents noticed in the subsequent Poems are such, with some few exceptions introduced by way of contrast, as occur in the Forests of Great Britain. The Author has endeavoured to delineate them with such a degree of particularity as might mark the characteristic features of each; and to avoid on the one hand florid and indeterminate description, and on the other, that minuteness of detail which would be scarcely intelligible to persons not accustomed studiously to examine the face of nature, and might prove tedious even to accurate observers. He has also had in view another object which he willingly avows; namely, to inculcate, on fit
a 2 occasions,

occasions, those moral truths, which the contemplation of the works of God in the natural world suggests, and that reverence and love for the great Creator which it is adapted to inspire. He trusts therefore that, not only when occupied in a professed enquiry into human duties, but also when engaged in composing the following pages, he has been employed in his proper vocation. And he would gladly hope that the present performance may tend to infuse into the minds of persons who delight in natural scenery, and especially of the young, those momentous principles, the influence of which, whether he solicits attention in prose or in verse, he is chiefly anxious to promote.

*Toxall Lodge,
December 2, 1795.*

CON-

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WALK THE FIRST.

ARGUMENT.

An ancient Poet's Comparison of the supposed Non-existence of Man after Death with the vernal Revival of the Vegetable World—The Lesson which ought to have been deduced from that Revival—Appearance of a Forest in May—Its Trees—Flowers—Analogy between the Diversity of vegetable Productions and the Diversity of human Talents—Forest Birds—Address to Parents—Deer—Cattle from the Highlands of Scotland, and their attendant Herdsman—Benefits of the Union of England and Scotland—The Herdsman's History—Fall of Timber—Charcoal-burners—Nature provides for the Succession of Trees—Comparative Freedom of Forest Trees, and of Trees taken under the more immediate Control of Man—This Subject illustrated by a Comparison between the State of the People of Great Britain and that of the Hindoos—Duty of the former towards the latter.

WALKS IN A FOREST.

WALK THE FIRST.

SPRING.

“THE meanest * herb we trample in the field,
“ Or in the garden nurture, when its leaf
“ At Winter’s touch is blasted, and its place

* Αἰ, αἰ, τὰ μαλακὰ μὲν ἔσαν κατὰ καπνὸν ὀλῶνται,
Ἡ τὰ χλωρὰ σέλινα, τὸ τ’ εὐθαλὲς ἔλον ἀνθόν,
Υῖες αὖ ζῶντι, καὶ εἰς ἔτος ἄλλο φυοῖσι.
Ἀρμὲς δ’ οἱ μεγάλοι, καὶ καρτεροί, ἡ σοφοὶ ἄνδρες,
Ὀπποῖε πρῶτα θανῶμεν, ἀνακοοὶ ἐν χθονὶ ποίλα
Εὐδομὲς ἐν μάλα μακρῶν, ἀλερμονα, νηγεῖον ὑπνόν.

MOSCHUS, IN EPITAPH. BION.

B

“ Forgotten,

" Forgotten, soon its vernal buds renews,
 " And from short slumber wakes to life again.
 " Man wakes no more ! Man, valiant, glorious, wife,
 " When death once chills him sinks in sleep profound,
 " A long, unconscious, never ending sleep !"

So mourn'd the untutor'd bard, wandering when May,
 As now, the plains revived : ere * sprang the Prince
 Of righteousness, with healing on his wings,
 Triumphant from the sepulchre ; while he,
 Hell's Ruler, he who late, madden'd with joy,
 Had pointed to his Powers in air convened,
 With many a scoff and many a bitter sneer
 Impious, the sad procession as it moved
 From Calvary to the yet unclosed tomb,
 View'd the grave yield its conqueror ; and aghast,
 And from his eminence as by lightning hurl'd,
 Shunn'd in the deepest midnight of his realms
 The wrath of earth and heaven's Almighty Lord.

Said the complaining lay, " Man wakes no more ?"
 O blind, who read'st not in the teeming soil,

* Moschus flourished about two hundred years before the
 Christian era.

The

The fresher meadow, and the bursting wood,
 A nobler lion! God, who in the gloom
 Of Gentile darkness on an erring world
 Pitying look'd down, nor without witness left
 His providential care, bade Nature's voice
 To man his future destiny suggest:
 Bade Spring with annual admonition hold
 Her emblematic taper; not with blaze
 Potent each shade of doubt and fear to chase,
 Yet friendly through the perilous dusk to aid
 His steps, till the dawn crimson'd, and arose
 The long expected day-star in the East.

That star has risen; and with a light, which flames
 The sun's meridian splendor, has illumed
 The distant wonders of eternity.
 Yet may this sylvan wild, from Winter's grasp
 Now rescued, to the musing mind recall
 Man's promised * immortality; while roves

The

* " Vide quàm in solatium nostri resurrectionem futuram
 omnis natura meditetur. Sol demergit & nascitur; astra labuntur
 & redeunt; flores occidunt & reviviscunt; post senium arbuta
 frondeſcunt;

The eye unfated with delight from shade
 To shade, from grove to thicket, from near groups
 To yon primæval woods with darkening sweep
 Retiring; and with beauty sees the whole
 Kindle, and glow with renovated life.
 For now, at Spring's reanimating call,
 As when the Archangel's trump our slumbering dust
 Shall rouse, and earth and sea resign their dead,
 Each native of the forest, from the trunk
 Towering and huge down to the tangled bush,
 Its own peculiar character resumes.
 Chief of the glade, the oak its foliage stain'd
 With tender olive and pale brown protrudes,
 Proud of a shelter'd monarch, proud to lend
 A chaplet still to British loyalty.
 Even yet with ruddy spoils from Autumn won
 Loaded, the beech its lengthen'd buds untwines.

*frondescent; semina non nisi corrupta revirescent. Ita corpus in
 sæculo, ut arbores in hiberno occultant virorem ariditate mentitæ.
 Quid festinas ut crudâ adhuc hyeme reviviscat & redeat? Ex-
 pectandum nobis etiâ corporis ver est.*"—Minucius Felix.

Its

Its knotted bloom secured, the ash puts forth
Its winged leaf : the hawthorn wraps its boughs
In snowy mantle : from the vivid greens
That shine around, the holly, winter's pride,
Recedes abash'd. The willow, in yon vale,
Its silver lining to the breeze upturns,
And rustling aspens shiver by the brook ;
While the un sullied stream, from April showers
Refined, each sparkling pebble shews that decks
Its bottom ; and each scaly habitant
Quick glancing in the shallows, or in quest
Of plunder slowly failing in the deep.
Beneath the shadowing canopy the ground
Glitters with flowery dyes ; the primrose, first
In mossy dell returning Spring to greet ;
Pilewort, that o'er her roots of old renown
Expands the radiance of her starry bloom ;
Arum, that in a mantling hood conceals
Her purple club, and spreads her spotted leaf
Arm'd with keen tortures for the unwary tongue ;
Anemone *, now robed in virgin white,

* Wood anemone. *Anemone nemorosa* Linn.

Now blushing with faint crimson; changeful spurge*,
 On redden'd stem with poisonous milk imbued
 And circled with dark foliage rearing high
 Her golden head; sorrel†, that hangs her cups,
 Ere their frail form and streaky veins decay,
 O'er her pale verdure, then with shortening stems
 Beneath the closing leaves her seeds withdraws;
 The pendent harebell; and the scentless plant‡
 That with the violet's borrow'd form and hue
 The unskilful wanderer in the shade deceives.

In size, in form, in texture, and in use,
 How various are the vegetable tribes
 That clothe and decorate the earth! Some urge
 Aloft their tapering stems, or knotted strength,

* Wood spurge. *Euphorbia amygdaloides* Linn.

† Wood sorrel. *Oxalis acetosa* Linn. This plant, as soon as its petals have fallen off, thrusts its seed-vessels, with a motion in appearance almost voluntary, under the contiguous leaves; the foot-stalk, which till then had been straight, bending itself back in a sharp angle, and thus bringing down its charge to the shelter provided by nature.

‡ Dog's violet. *Viola canina* Linn.

Destined with fleets to spread the seas, or build
Engines, whose ponderous and convulsive strokes
Thundering shall rock the ground. With penfile boughs
Some droop o'er willowy streams, and yield their growth
For humbler service. Some, in verdant robe
With flowery change diversified the soil
Veiling, with fragrance cheer, with food sustain
The animated world. Distinguish'd thus,
All from one Source supreme draw life and health,
Proclaim his power, and by his power fulfil
The ends of their creation. Kindred plans
Speak the same Author. Mark the varied dower
Of talents given to men. These trace the laws
That bind the planets to their orbs, and heave
The billowy tide. The helm of empire those
Steer, or the scales of justice poise, or wield,
When duty prompts, the thunderbolts of war.
Some in translucent narrative recall
Past ages, or in visionary song
Heroic worth pourtray. Inventive some
Smooth life's rough path with useful arts. Some ply
The spade and ploughshare, skilful to foreknow

What best each foil may yield. Vain of his powers
Thee, the great Giver, thee, Parent of good,
Man overlooks or scorns. Thy several gifts,
Harmonious though dissimilar, all conspire
To swell the sum of general bliss, all work
Thy glory; all well pleasing in thy sight,
Who bad'st the children of the dust perform
Each his peculiar office, and combin'd
In one vast family with fraternal love
Lend mutual aid, and praise their common God.

While thus the imprison'd leaves and waking flowers
Burst from their tombs, the birds that lurk'd unseen
Amid the wintry shade start forth, and catch
New life, new rapture, from the voice of Spring.
With wings, now here now there in changeful course
Hurrying, the branches flutter, and resound
With notes that suit a forest. Hoarsely screams
The jay. With shrill and oft repeated cry
Her angular course, alternate rise and fall,
The woodpecker pursues; then to the trunk
Close clinging with unwearied beak assails
The hollow bark; through every cell the strokes

Echoing

Echoing terrific rouse from wintry sleep
 Her prey ; hope glistens on her verdant plumes,
 And brighter scarlet sparkles on her crest.
 Chatters the restless pie. In sober brown
 Drest, but with nature's tenderest pencil touch'd,
 The wryneck her monotonous complaint
 Continues ; harbinger * of her, who doom'd
 Never the sympathetic joy to know
 That warms the mother cowering o'er her young,
 Some stranger robs, and to that stranger's love
 Her egg commits unnatural ; the nurse
 Deluded the voracious nestling feeds
 With toil unceasing, and amazed beholds
 Its form gigantic and discordant hue.
 Thus oft in village street the traveller views
 Some youthful mother with o'erlabour'd arms
 Clasp her huge awkward child : beneath the load]

* The Welsh consider this bird as the forerunner or servant of
 the cuckoo, and call it *gwâs y gog*, or the cuckoo's attendant.
 The Swedes regard it in the same light. Pennant's *Brit. Zool.*
 4th edit. vol. i. p. 238. In the midland counties of England the
 common people call it the cuckoo's maiden.

Bending,

Bending, she gazes on its ample face,
And scarce believes the enormous boy her own.
Meanwhile the little songsters, prompt to cheer
Their mates close brooding in the brake below,
Strain their shrill throats ; or with parental care
From twig to twig their timid offspring lead ;
Teach them to seize the unwary gnat, to poise
Their pinions, in short flights their strength to prove,
And venturous trust the bosom of the air.

O ye ! whose knees a youthful progeny climbs,
While mirth, the fruit of innocence and love,
Dimples their cheeks, and shuts their laughing eyes,
Think on your charge ! Fast as the expanding mind
Receives the lesson, truth's instructive lore
Infuse. Leave not the vacant soil a prey
To weeds quick-sprouting ; plant with earliest care
The seeds ye most desire should fill the heart,
And nurse with zeal proportion'd to its worth
Each rising produce. Teach your infant race
That 'tis not theirs, like songsters of the grove
Born but to sport and flutter for a day,
To dote on vain and transitory joys.

Teach

Teach them the harder nobler task decreed
To prove the fons of Adam. Teach them love
Supreme of God, and, next to God, of man.
Teach them 'tis theirs, in arduous conflict ranged
'Gainst sin and powers of darkness, to make known
Their firm allegiance to the King of Kings.
Teach them, though weak, to triumph in the strength
Omnipotence stands ready to afford
The faithful combatant : while Heaven spreads wide
Her glories, and displays the victor's crown,
His crown eternal ; and beneath, Hell yawns
Insatiate, and her muttering thunders rolls,
And heaves her floods of ever-during fire.

Nor want these lawns that terminate the woods
Their tenants. O'er the gorse the agile deer
Vault with light bounds, and sportive scour the plain
In mock pursuit. Pour'd from the neighbouring farms
Wide stray the cattle. Mark yon wearied herd ;
Mark the unguarded front, the slender limb,
The tawny ear, the fable-vested side.
From Scotia's hills they come. There were they wont
To pick from rocky chinks the blade, and crop

The

The sapless shoots of heath ; there train'd in arts
Sprung from necessity, with skilful feet,
Uplifted and again descending quick,
The prickly furze they bruised, and of its arms
Pungent in vain despoil'd their wintry fare :
Or in the stormy Hebrides forlorn
Rush'd duly from the moor, scenting afar *
The ebbing tide ; and prowling on the sand,
And midst the slippery stones, with weeds marine
And ocean's refuse famine's rage repell'd.
Now in mild clime and copious pasture placed
Their driver quits them ; he who deck'd in plaid
And plumed bonnet had their steps pursued,
While flocking children gazed and wonder'd loud,
All the long tedious march ; and still, when showers
Beat fleety, round his limbs regardless wrapt
His chequer'd covering ; and when cross the road
Some bright rill hurried, from the knapsack drew
His bowl and oaten flour, and frugal mix'd
His food delicious to his palate braced
By labour, and by luxury unpall'd.

* See Pennant's Voyage to the Hebrides, 4to, 1774, p. 308.

O blest effects of policy inspired
 By Wisdom, Justice, Mercy, which allured
 Contiguous kingdoms once by rival aims
 And savage feuds disjoin'd, and mutual wrong,
 Like kindred drops of quicksilver to blend
 In one congenial mass ! Their bordering plains
 No more with piles of slaughter'd warriors heap'd,
 Invaders and invaded, nor illumed
 By midnight gleams from hamlets waked by shout
 Of dire incursion spreading flames and death,
 Smile grateful. Hence yon herdsman, he whose fires
 Trod not on English ground but fire and blood
 And rapine mark'd their footsteps, now in peace
 Brings wealth and plenty from the farthest north,
 And pours o'er Mercian * meads the annual joy.

That herdsman's early youth far other toils
 Engaged, when with unequal hands he strove
 To whirl the huge clymore †, and scarce sustain'd

The

* The ancient kingdom of Mercia comprehended seventeen of the middle counties of England.

† The great two-handed broad-sword of the Highlanders, used from antient times down to the battle of Killcrankie; and probably of the same kind with the "ingentes gladii," which Tacitus describes

The target's weight. Oft have I seen his scars,
 And often have I listen'd to his tale.
 Him uninform'd attachment to his chief,
 That chief misguided loyalty, arranged
 Beneath Rebellion's standard. On thy plain,
 Culloden, sunk their inauspicious arms,
 And fondly nurtured hopes! With terror wing'd
 Through pathless solitudes the chieftain fled
 The hot pursuit; together fled the youth
 Breathless and pale, nor reck'd his throbbing wounds.
 At length the distant coast they trod; and gazed
 Impatient for the bark, ordain'd to plow
 Those unfrequented billows, if mischance
 Should blight their enterprize: as he who stretch'd
 Sleepless and tossing on his feverish bed
 Pants for the dawn, and towards the adverse wall
 Still turns his wearied sight, eager to catch
 The first pale ray that mitigates the gloom,

scribes the Caledonians as employing at the battle of the Grampian
 Hills. The target was commonly used in conjunction with it. See
 Pennant's *Voyage to the Hebrides*, 4to, 1774, p. 289, 290; and
 his *Tour in Scotland*, 4to, 3d edit. p. 191; and Part 2d, 4to, 1776,
 Additions at the end, p. 28.

And

And tells of twilight's birth. Four tedious days
 Each formless speck, that on the horizon's verge
 Hover'd obscure, with straining eyes they watch'd
 From morn to latest eve ; whether the moon
 Bade ocean his recoiling floods absorb,
 Or hurl'd the deluge on the expecting shore.
 The fifth morn rose ; the long-fought vessel furl'd
 Her canvas, near approaching. On a rock
 Impending o'er the tide the chieftain waved
 The appointed signal.—With concussive roar
 Echoed the cliffs : the foes, who on his steps
 With vengeful wile had hung, noted their prey,
 And launch'd the murderous bullet. Prone he fell,
 And o'er his head the reddening furies closed.
 Fear-struck, and forrowing for his hapless lord
 The youth from slaughter fled : the adverse band
 Discern'd him not. O'er many a houseless moor,
 And bog beneath his footsteps quivering wide,
 And craggy height he wander'd, till he gain'd
 The piny forest that o'er * Jurna's deeps

Flung

* Loch-Iurn, a salt-water loch on the western coast of Inverness-shire, penetrating many miles inland, and surrounded by mountains

Flung its black horrors ; while amid the gloom
 Gray rocks their glittering summits rear'd, and dash'd
 From precipice to precipice, through clouds
 Of sparkling mist the headlong torrents shone.
 There in a cavern, from whose beetling roof
 The native fir shot pillar-like towards heaven,
 And lightly waving in the wind the birch
 Stream'd its long branches, he found refuge. Moss
 Supplied his couch, decaying boughs his fire.
 With sylvan berries, and thy tuberous roots,
 Cormeille *, famed cure of hunger's gnawing pangs,

His

tains and pine-forests of Alpine magnificence. See Pennant's
 Voyage to the Hebrides, p. 342, 343.

* The Heath-pea, *Oriobus tuberosus* Linn. : called Cormeille,
 or Carmele, in the Highlands.

“ Among other vegetables, we have in great plenty in the
 “ heaths and woods the following berries ; wild rasps, wild straw-
 “ berries, blueberries, bugberries, uva ursi, &c. And we have one
 “ root I cannot but take notice of, which we call Carmele. It is
 “ a root that grows in heaths and birch-woods to the bigness of a
 “ large nut, and sometimes four or five roots are joined by fibres ;
 “ it bears a green stalk, and a small red flower. Dio, speaking of
 “ the Caledonians, says, *Certum cibi genus parant ad omnia ; quem si*
 “ *ceperint,*

His strength exhausted he repair'd. And oft
With shafts uncouth, while envious falcons scream'd,
Floating

“ *ceperint, quantum est unius fabæ magnitudo, minimè esurire aut*
“ *stare solent.* Cæsar, de Bell. Civ. lib. 3tio, writes that Vale-
“ rius’s soldiers found a root called Chara, *quod admistum lacte*
“ *multam inopiam levabat; id ad similitudinem panis efficiebant.* I
“ am inclined to think that our Carmele (that is, sweet-root) is
“ Dio’s *Cibi genus*; and Cæsar’s *Cbara*. I have often seen it dried,
“ and kept for journeys through hills, where no provisions could
“ be had. I have likewise seen it pounded and infused; and when
“ yest or barm is put to it, it ferments, and makes a liquor more
“ agreeable and wholesome than mead. It grows so plentifully,
“ that a cart-load of it can easily be gathered; and the drink of
“ it is very balsamic.” Mr. Shaw’s Account of Elgin. Pennant’s
Tour in Scotland, p. 292.

“ The Highlanders have a great esteem for the tubercles of the
“ roots of the Cormeille; they dry and chew them, in general to
“ give a better relish to their liquor: they also affirm them to be
“ good against most disorders of the thorax, and that by the use of
“ them they are enabled to repel hunger and thirst for a long time.
“ In Breadalbane and Ross-shire they sometimes bruise and steep
“ them in water, and make an agreeable fermented liquor with
“ them. They have a sweet taste, something like the roots of
C “ liquorice,

Floating in air, and from the mountain's brow
 The indignant eagle mark'd him, he transfix'd
 The roe *, bounding in vain, and snowy hare †
 Changeful ; and from the pine's high top brought down
 The giant grouse ‡, while boastful he display'd

His

“ liquorice, and when boiled, we are told, are well-flavoured and
 “ nutritive, and in times of scarcity have served as a substitute for
 “ bread.” Lightfoot's *Flora Scotica*, vol. i. p. 389.

* Roes are mentioned by Mr. Pennant as common inhabitants
 of the Scotch pine forests, from the banks of Loch Lomond to the
 entrance into Caithness. When the ground is covered with snow,
 they browse on the extreme branches of the pine and juniper.
 Pennant's *Tour*, p. 94. Eagles and falcons also frequent the same
 scenes.

† The Alpine Hare ; of which Mr. Pennant (*Tour*, p. 84)
 says, that it inhabits the summits of the highest hills, is less than
 the common hare, and, when pursued, seeks shelter as soon as pos-
 sible under stones. During summer its predominant colour is grey.
 About September it begins to assume a snowy whiteness, and be-
 comes entirely white, except about the edges and tips of the ears.
 In April it resumes its grey coat.

‡ The Capercalze, called also Auercalze, Capercally, and Cock
 of the Wood, and occasionally from its great size the Horse of the
 Woods,

His breast of varying green, and crow'd, and clapp'd
 His glossy wings: or to the ebbing lake
 Descending wary, gather'd on the beach
 The shell-clad race, or seiz'd the finny prize
 Left floundering in the shallows. Peace meanwhile
 Brighten'd the land, and Justice through the depths
 Of glens and woods proclaim'd the fated sword.
 He heard, and joyful fought his much-loved home.

Tremble the glades. Yon hill's majestic gloom
 Portentous shakes. Heard ye not Britain's voice
 Speaking in thunder to the woods? She calls
 Their long protected growth her shores to guard

Woods, as it sometimes weighs fifteen pounds, is the largest of the grouse species. It inhabits pine forests, and perches on the top of very tall trees, and feeds on the extreme shoots. The colour of the breast is green, resembling that of the peacock. Pennant's Tour in Scotland, p. 198, and 293; and do. part 2d, 4to, 1776, p. 23, 24. In the spring this bird is accustomed to take its station on a high tree, clapping its wings, and crowing with a loud and shrill voice. It may then be approached with the utmost ease by the fowler. See Pennant's British Zoology, 4th edit. vol. i. p. 264, and p. 266, note.

With tributary aid, and round her isle
Found on the seas an adamantine wall.
Pierce we those shades. The solitude resounds
With busy life. The uplifted axe, urged deep
By sinewy arms, while the well planted feet
Keep firm the muscles of the straining back,
Delves the resisting trunk ; from every stroke
Wide fly the fragments. Now the assailants pause,
Wearied and breathless ; now, to deadliest rage
By mutual exhortation fired, return
Fierce to the charge. The sylvan monarch groans,
And shakes his leafy crown presageful. Hark !
That blow was fatal. From his base disjoin'd,
While from his furious sweep the victors fly,
He falls ; loud sounds the shock ; his splinter'd arms
Crash ; the hills tremble ; ruin spreads the ground.
So mitred Persia, from her throne by strength
Of Macedon push'd headlong, with her fall
Shook earth and ocean ; from their parent flock
Her hundred provinces broke short, and spread
Empire's huge fragments o'er the astonish'd East.
Now this now that way drawn the harsh saw grates,
Severing

Severing the mighty limbs. Those strip the bark ;
In heaps these rear it. Those the thinner boughs
Hew to fit lengths ; these in well order'd tiers
Dispose them, sedulous the pile to raise,
Which, with stout greenward roof from wet secured,
May burn to sooty charcoal. Near its side
Yon children in the ground their pliant poles
Fix, and the tops unite : these, interlaced
With twigs, his wigwam as the Indian weaves
In transatlantic wilds, or cloth'd with turf
As builds his summer hut on mountain top
The Cambrian herdsman, shelter shall afford,
While the slow-kindled mass they tend, and watch
To open in time fresh inlets for the breeze,
And pierce new chimnies for the imprison'd smoke.
Thus eager in the sylvan toil unite
Brisk youth and sturdy manhood ; each absorb'd
In its own task, nor conscious that the arm
Of industry, plied hard for daily bread,
Digs the foundations of a kingdom's power,
And props the splendid fabric of the state.
Soon the peel'd trunk, reft of its branched head,

And by mechanic force upheaved, shall quit
Its native lawn, while the tired oxen pant,
And groans the wain beneath the ponderous load.

So fade the chieftains of the wood ; their place
Knows them no more ; the defoliated blank
Gapes, and admits the long excluded day.
Yet shall contiguous saplings through the void
Push their swift growth ; and with columnar stems
Mounting through ether, and with ample spread
Darkening the plain, shall emulate their fires.
Thus when the statesman and the warrior fall,
Dejected Albion mourns ; but soon a race,
With memory of paternal virtue warm'd,
Pleads in the senate, conquers in the field ;
And while approving heaven the purpose crowns,
Upholds the reign of freedom, and of law,
Of social order and domestic peace.

All hail, free foresters ! I call you thus,
Though fought for noble service at the voice
Of man your heads to earth ye bow. For man
Respects your rights, nor harasses the wilds
With needless interference. There his hand

Enslaves

Enslaves you not : while yet he spares the tree,
He spares its freedom ; leaves each stem to shoot
As nature prompts the kind ; nor strains your boughs
To forms uncouth, nor trims with plastic sheers,
And calls his operations by the name,
The name profaned, of beauty. Think on those,
Your kindred, whom the tasteless tyrant shapes
At his own will ; and dooms their living stems
To service more degrading than his pile
Of roots and logs and refuse brushwood knows.
Think on the yew, that fix'd in luckless hour
Its growth beside his dwelling. See its crest
Lopt close, while from the mutilated stock
Pillars and pyramids and statues rise,
Giants and dwarfs. Behold the tortured box
Now frown, a bear ; now grin, an ape ; now feign
A peacock's pride, and in eternal green
Still strut, still spread its unrelenting tail.
Mark, happy foresters, your brethren's shame,
And triumph in your liberty ! And ye,
Britannia's freeborn offspring, turn your eyes
To climes which Ganges floats with streams of gold :
In links of steel where superstition binds

The unsuspecting native ; to his cast
Tethers him ; cramps his powers ; condemns to ply
With joyless hands the trade his fires have plied
With joyless hands for centuries ; proscribes
All hope of change, all prospect to o'erleap
Or burst her barriers, to the skies upraised,
And steadfast as the chambers of the grave.
Behold, and bless the Power who cast your lot
In Freedom's land, where Genius unconfined
Pursues his favourite path ; where Science warms
Each latent energy of soul ; and Truth
Heaven-born her holy radiance pours abroad.
And O ! for India's wretched sons ye deem
Your subjects, yet, even yet, at last fulfil
A master's charge. Ye have a master too,
Throned in the skies, and watchful to avenge
Neglected duty. With persuasive lore,
Not force, but truth persuasive, loose the chains
They ignorantly prize ; bid them be free
To act as men ; teach them alike to scorn
The senseless idol and his wily priest,
Britain's mild laws with glad acclaim embrace,
And hail the dawn of evangelic day.

WALK THE SECOND.

ARGUMENT.

A Summer Noon contrasted with a Summer Morning—
Burners of Fern—Great Conflagrations occasioned by Fern
Fires—Story of a Cottager—A Forest Pool—Horses and
Cattle collected by it—Village-boy come in search of his
Master's Cattle—Hazy Effect of Noon on remote Woods—
Distant View of a Church—Reflections—A Forest, though
without the characteristic Grandeur and Beauty of Moun-
tains, of Rocks, of Lakes, or of Sea-shores, has Grandeur
and Beauty of its own.

WALK THE SECOND.

SUMMER.—NOON.

THE solstice rages : Nature sinks oppress'd
Beneath the sultry glow. Hide me, ye woods,
Hide in your shades impenetrable ; waft
A breeze reviving from your inmost depths ;
While your tall trunks between I gaze abroad
On the parch'd world, or watch the trooping deer
Safe in the covert from the scorching ray
Shelter'd. They fly not me ; no murderous tube
Gleams in my hand : but far aloof they shun
Him, whose green vesture and suspicious gait
Mark him their authoris'd destroyer. Few
And those short-seeming hours since morn, have pass'd ;
Yet this brief interval the clime has changed

From temperate zone to torrid. Scatter'd clouds,
With orient blush empurpled, half obscured
The rising orb of light ; gray mists, diffused
O'er the wide lawn, and from the wooded hill
Dim through their skirts discern'd retiring flow,
His struggling beams restrain'd ; yon reverend oaks,
Fronting the east, across the illumined vale
Stretch'd their long shadows ; glisten'd bright with dew
The grass ; and cool and balmy breathed the air.
Now from the burning firmament the sun
Each cloud has driven ; with universal light
Blazing, the earth repels the dazzled eye,
Save where a lonely spot of shade lies close
Beneath some massy tree, or woods extend
Their dark recesses ; the faint traveller's step
On the tann'd plain slides printless, as when frost
Has glazed the dangerous path ; no wandering breeze
The hush'd aerial ocean moves ; and fierce
As when in Indian skies it rages, heat
Cleaves the parch'd earth, and drains the ebbing stream.

Yet cannot heat's meridian rage deter
The cottage-matron from her annual toil.

On that rough bank behold her, bent to reap
The full-grown fern, her harvest, and prepare
Her balls of purifying ashes. First
A firm bare spot she chooses for the hearth;
Then strikes the steel, the tinder covers light
With wither'd leaves and dry; then stoops to fan
The glimmering sparks, and motionless remains,
Watching the infant flame from side to side
Run through the thin materials. Round her stray
Children or grandchildren, a cheerful train,
Dispersed among the bushes; esteem each
To execute the task her voice assigns,
Half sport, half labour, fit for early youth.
One plies the hook, the rake another trails;
Another, staggering, bears the verdant load
Uplifted in his arms; another hastes
Her apron's burthen to discharge. Each step
Active and prompt obedience quickens, zeal
Inspired by love; that temper of the soul
Which to the parent most endears the child,
The christian to his God. Well pleased the dame
Receives their tribute; part she heaps aside

In

In store for night, the embers to preserve
From quenching dews; part on the kindled pile
Cautious she sprinkles; duly with her fork
Raising the half-burnt strata to admit
Supply of flame-supporting air; as oft,
The enliven'd mass glows bright, and crackles loud.
Issuing from frequent chinks the smoke pours forth
Its curling volumes; not as when, condensed
By evening's gelid atmosphere, it creeps
Below the hill, and draws along the ground
Its lengthen'd line, and dies away diffused
In hazy vapour; but aspiring rears
Its column perpendicular, far seen
With broad and dusky head, to pilgrim's eye
As view'd o'er Salem's plain the palm ascends.
Hence shall the housewife in the distant town
With eager gaze her whiten'd cloth admire,
And slight the produce of Hibernian looms.

Oft from these fires pernicious sparks adrift
Borne by the wind; or thrown by rustic hands
With secret purpose that the soil, from base
And noxious vegetation freed, may yield

Salubrious

Salubrious pasture to the grazing herd;
Seize the dead grafs, the furzy brake invade,
Kindle the matted brushwood, and from hill
To hill the sudden conflagration spread.
Woe to the mighty oak that on the plain
Grown old in folitary grandeur, meets
The fiery deluge in its courfe; the blaze
Round the roots rattles, climbs the finged trunk,
Devours the leaves, and o'er the topmoft boughs
Its fmoke-ftain'd canopy triumphant rears.
Thus when with dizzy heads and armed hands
The unbridled multitude the task affumes
To cleanfe from ftains and mould to happier form
The frame of fome well-order'd ftate; if craft
Political or priestly guile has rear'd
Some nuifance dangerous to the public weal,
The caufe that moved or feem'd to move the ftorm,
It finks unpitied. But the infatiate blaft
Still rages, Uproar thunders, Havock stalks
Fearlefs; Law, Empire falls; the reverend pile
By hoary wifdom plann'd, by patriot ftrength
Up-raifed, by patriot blood cemented, falls
Headlong,

Headlong, and frantic myriads shout for joy.
Wider and wider o'er the blacken'd waste
Her burning tide Destruction rolls. From sleep
Roused by the unaccustom'd sound, the fox
Starts, listens quick, the scent of fire inhales
Dismay'd, and rushes forth; the heath-cock wakes,
And springs in terror through the fervid air.
Meanwhile the clouds dark rising from the spoil
The neighbouring hamlets, conscious of the cause,
View unalarm'd: but at the close of day
The horizon red with settled glow, and oft
With spiry flashes gleaming, fills with awe
Tracts far remote; and to the boding mind
The picture holds of harvests stored in vain,
Of ravaged farms, and villages destroy'd.

And are these terrors vain? Behold yon spot
Beneath those sloping coverts, where the eye
Along the ditch yet faintly to be traced,
And edged with interrupted mounds of earth
By mouldering time but half worn down, pursues
The fence that once existed; while within,
The smoother surface and the livelier green

The

The cultivating hand of man record.
There by the shelter'd vale a peasant youth
Attracted fought his cot to rear; nor fought
Hopeless: the indulgent lord of the domain
Nodded assent. Swift rose the humble wall,
And swift the straw-clad roof. Thither ere long
The happy bridegroom led the maid, whose charms
Had won his heart. Soon his industrious spade
Reclaim'd a corner from the waste: in vain
The lofty-vaulting deer, the searching hare,
His wattled hedge assail'd. The garden spread
Its herbs salubrious, gay with mingled flowers,
Crocus and snowdrop, tulip brought from far,
Violet now blue, now white, and primrose fetch'd
From neighbouring thicket. Rolling seasons nursed
His orchard's vernal fragrance, and weigh'd low
The boughs far gleaming with autumnal gold.
Oft when the plain before the rushing North
In snowy waves moved wild, his chimney's smoke,
Whirl'd rapid in blue eddies, to his door
The wilder'd traveller led. The peasant grasp'd
His oaken staff, and wading through the drifts

Pointed the buried road ; or to his fire
Convey'd the shivering stranger, and renew'd
The crackling blaze, while from her choicest stores
His partner cull'd the hospitable meal.
Thus glided on the peaceful years, till age
Sprinkled their locks with silver : scarce had grief
E'er clogg'd the wings of time, save when their child,
An only daughter, o'er her husband's grave
Mourn'd ceaseless, and by wasting anguish bow'd
Soon follow'd him ; yet left two orphan babes
The ancient pair to sooth. Their prattling mirth
Cheer'd the long winter-eve, and added joy
To blissful summer. One unhappy night,
The grandfire, who had mark'd the distant hill
By kindled furze illumed o'erpower the moon,
From unrefreshing sleep with sudden start
Woke gasping : suffocating vapours dense
His cottage fill'd. Scarce conscious he sprang forth
Untainted air to breathe. He turn'd, and saw
The fiercely vollied sparks, the pillar'd fire,
Burst from the thatch. Inward he rush'd to save
What more than life he loved. At once the roof

Sunk ;

Sunk ; higher tower'd the flame : wife, husband, babes,
One ruin whelm'd ; one grave their bones received.

Lo, how yon pool, by unexhausted springs
Still nurtured, draws the multitudes that graze
The plains adjacent ! On the bank worn bare,
And printed with ten thousand steps, the colts
In shifting groups combine ; or, to the brink
Descending, dip their pasterns in the wave.
Bolder the horned tribes, or less of heat
And teasing insects patient, far from shore
Bathe deep their chests ; or, by thick swarms pursued,
Lash their tormented sides, and, stamping quick
And oft, the muddy fluid scatter round.
Fix'd many an hour, till milder skies recall
Desire of long forgotten food, they stand
Each in its place ; save when some wearied beast
The pressure of the crowd no longer brooks,
Or in mere vagrant mood its station quits
Restless ; or some intruder, from afar
Flying o'er hill and plain the gadbee's sting
(For still the dreaded hum she hears, and shakes
The air with iterated lowings), spies

The watry gleam. With wildly-tossing head,
And tail projected far, and maddening gait,
She plunges in, and breaks the ranks, and spreads
Confusion, till constrain'd at length she stops,
Wedged in the throng. Beneath a neighbouring bush,
Poor shelter from the potent ray, reclines
The rustic boy to count his master's herd
Sent from yon hamlet; left some straggler, seized
By sharp and sudden malady, should pine
Untended in the wood; or, resolute
To crop forbidden pasture, overleap
The well-plash'd fence, and roam through distant fields.
Panting, bareheaded, and with outstretch'd arms
He sleeps; and dreams of winter's frosty gale,
Of sunless thickets, rills with breezy course,
Morn's dewy freshness, and cool rest at eve.

So when in slumber the poor exile seeks
A pause from woe, delusive fancy's hand
Presents each object of his fond desire.
He reads the joyful summons to return;
Beholds the bark prepared, the swelling sail;
Hears the impatient seamen murmur; grasps

The pendent rope exulting ; climbs the deck ;
Skims o'er the waves, and hails his native shore.

From the whole surface of the tepid earth,
But most from rivers rippling swift, and pools,
And trickling springs, and oozy swamps exhaled,
A vapoury steam floats, with the loaded air
Yet uncombined ; and undulating still
And ever twinkling, o'er the distant woods
Sheds a blue haze, and dims their shadowy forms.
Where through the tufted coverts of the grove
Descends that opening glade, leading the eye
To scenes beyond the forest's bounds removed,
How nobly midst the fading objects stands
Yon * fane pre-eminent ! It warms my heart,
When through the wide-spread provinces I stray
Of this fair realm, to view the slender spire
And massy tower from deep-embowering shades
Oft rising in the vale, or on the side
Of gently sloping hills, or, loftier placed,
Crowning the wooded eminence. It looks

* Lichfield Cathedral.

As though we own'd a God, adored his power,
Revered his wisdom, loved his mercy; deem'd
He claims the empire of this lower world,
And marks the deeds of its inhabitants.

It looks as though we deem'd he fills all space
Present throughout; and sits on heaven's high throne
With ears attentive to the poor man's prayer.

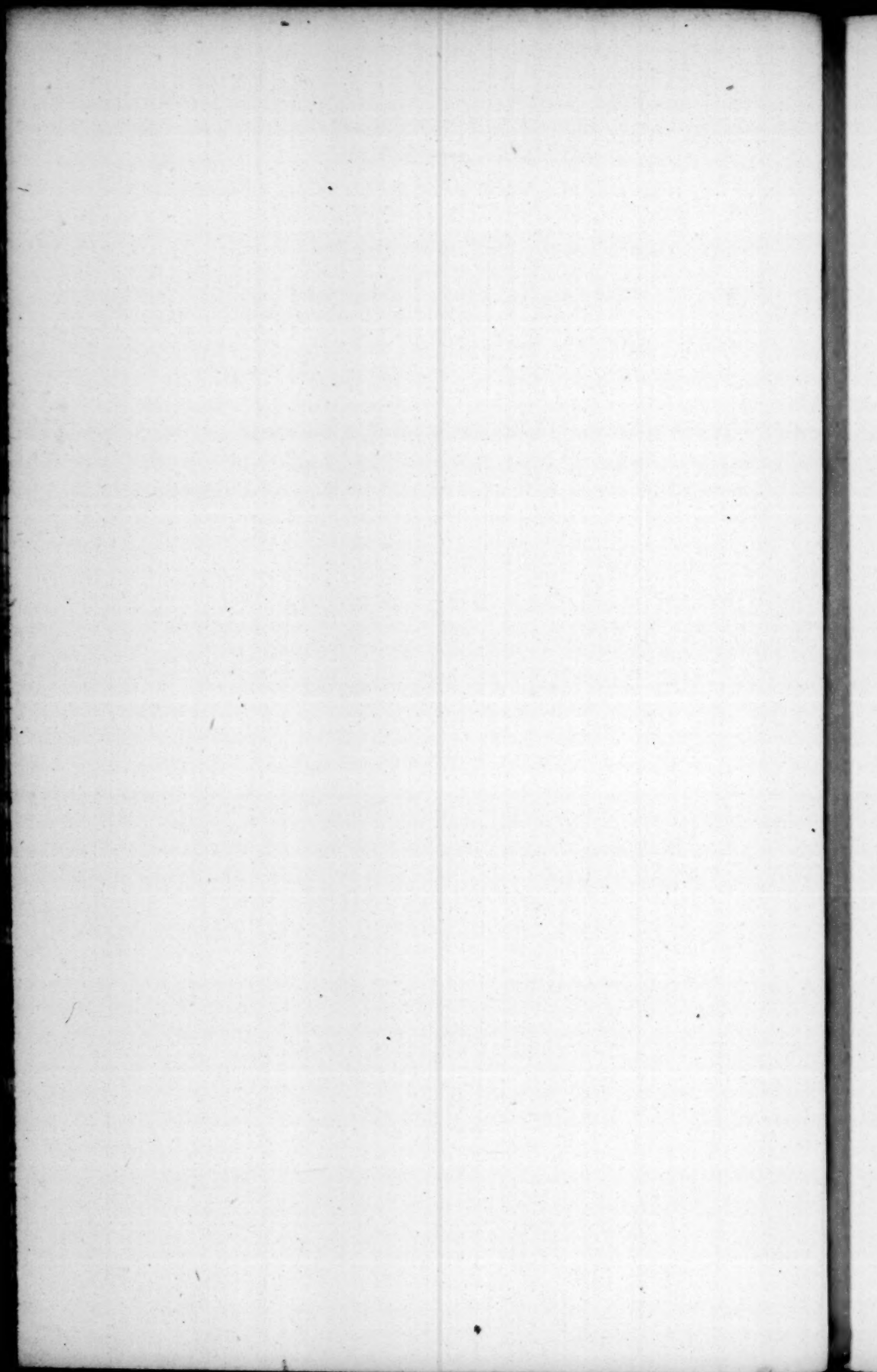
It looks as though we shrunk not from the thought
Of that last mansion (last, as far as earth
Detains us), where in solemn silence laid

Our dust shall slumber; till a voice, like that
Which speaking by the astonish'd * prophet's mouth,
Roused the dry bones that strew'd the spacious vale
To sudden life, shall call the unnumber'd dead,
Primæval Adam with his latest sons,
From every clime before their judge's face
To stand, and hear their everlasting doom.

God clothes his works with beauty. What though here
He has not wrapp'd in clouds the mountain's head
Magnificent, nor piled the fractured rock;

* Ezekiel, chap. xxxvii.

Nor delved the stony cavern stretching wide
Its unsupported roof ; nor down the steep
Pour'd the rude cataract ; nor bid the lake
Expand its splendid mirror to the sun ;
Nor ocean's billowy surges wash the base
Of promontories, whose white cliffs with fowl
Swarming of every seaborn tribe, resound
With countless wings, and never wearied cries :
Yet has his hand the intermingling charms
Of hill and valley, lawn, and winding dell,
In rich exuberance spread ; yet has his hand
Hung these wild banks with sylvan majesty.



WALK THE THIRD.

ARGUMENT.

A Summer Evening described—Moon rises—Stars and Planets—Address to them—Nocturnal Birds—Insects—Wild-Cat—Weasel destroying a Leveret—Deer-Stealer—His Method of proceeding described—Pursuit of him by the Keepers—Address to the Votaries of Luxury—The Turtle—Effects of the Luxury of the Wealthy on the Morals and Fate of the Forest Peasant.

WALK THE THIRD.

SUMMER.—MOONLIGHT.

THE glow of eve is faded. Scarce the West
Retains a pale memorial of the beams
Which fired it, when the horizontal clouds,
With purple dyes and fissures edged with gold,
Streak'd the calm ether; while through sparkling haze
Glimmer'd the hills, more tender as their chain
Approach'd the fount of brightness, fainter still
Where sunk the parting orb, and with the sky
In undistinguishable splendor join'd.
Frown'd the old oak, and with contrasting gloom
Athwart the blaze his fable shadows flung.
Milder, still milder, the subsiding glow

Spared

Spared the pain'd eyeballs, and with sober rays
Quench'd in the gathering dusk refresh'd the sight :
As when remembrance of a buried friend
No longer with intensity of grief
Harrows the soul ; but, mellow'd down by time,
From sadness to composure sooths the breast,
Sacred composure, near allied to joy.
Soon o'er the hill the yellow-tinctured moon
Rose through the twilight, and with slanting ray
Gilded the topmost boughs ; while all the vale
And all its sloping boundaries lay wrapt
In shade unvaried. Now with lessening sphere
And silver aspect climbing, through the leaves
And thinner spray a tremulous gleam she throws,
Chequering the mossy path beneath our feet.
Round her the stars and planetary balls
With cloudless lustre burn ; not ranged in heaven
With mere design a twinkling aid to yield
To the late-wandering stranger, nor ordain'd
To rule our destinies, as craft averr'd,
And antient ignorance believed ; thy power,
Parent of all, they speak : they tell of worlds

Innume-

Innumerable, warm'd by other suns,
And peopled with innumerable hosts
Of beings, wondrous all, nor less than man
Work of thy hands, and children of thy care !

Ye sparkling isles of light that stud the sea
Of empyrèan ether, ye abodes
Of unknown myriads, spirits, or in bands
Held of corporeal frame ; fain would my soul,
Athirst for knowledge unreveal'd to man,
Question your habitants, and fain would hear
A voice responsive from your distant bourn.
Tell, tell me who possess your radiant climes,
What are their forms, their faculties, their hopes,
Their fears, if subject or to hope or fear ?
What fond pursuits, what animating toils
Diversify existence with delight ?
Rove they in course aërial unconfined
From sphere to sphere, with interchange of joy
Heightening their mutual blifs ; or dwell they fix'd,
Each in his native solitary orb,
Unconscious of the lot of neighbouring worlds ?
What homage, what returns of grateful love

Yield

Yield they to Him who made them? Stand they fast
In undecaying blessedness, secure
From risk of loss; or tread they yet the stage
Of perilous probation? Has Sin won
Conquests through disobedience o'er those hosts?
In your bright regions yawns the gate of Death?
Falls he, who falls, for ever?—Power supreme!
Pardon the aspiring thoughts that would presume
To pierce the veil, which shrouds from mortal eye
The wonders of thy realms! Enough, to know
'That thou art Lord! Thy universal love
Pervades Creation; on each living form
Showers down its proper happiness; and, when guilt
Wakes thy reluctant vengeance, stays the bolt
Of wrath, and pales its mitigated fire!

While with their heads beneath their ruffled plumes
Conceal'd, the birds that sported during day
Rest in these sheltering bushes, at whose roots
The vivid worm its nightly spark illumines;
And couching in that brake the timorous deer
Slumbers forgetful of each past alarm;
Issue from every lurking-place the tribes

That

That animate the dusk. Heard ye the owl
 Hoot to her mate responsive? 'Twas not she
 Whom floating on white pinions near his barn
 The farmer views well pleased, and bids his boy
 Forbear her nest; but she who cloth'd in robe
 Of unobtrusive hue, preys not beside
 Mouse-haunted cornstacks, and the thresher's floor,
 But prowls for plunder in the lonely wood.
 Hark from yon quivering bough the foe that wastes
 The insect train at eve, misnamed of old
 The Goatsucker, its whirring note prolongs *,
 Loud as the sound of busy maiden's wheel:
 Then with expanded beak, and throat enlarged

Even

* " This bird agrees with the swallow tribe in food and in the manner of taking it; differs in the time of preying, flying only by night; so with some justice may be called a nocturnal swallow. It feeds on moths, gnats, dorrs, or chaffers; from which Charlton calls it a Dorr-hawk; its food being entirely that species of beetle during the month of July. — Scopoli seems to credit the report of its sucking the teats of goats; an error delivered down from the days of Aristotle. Its notes are most singular; the loudest so much resembles

Even to its utmost stretch, its custom'd food
 Pursues voracious. In uncertain jerks
 Flitting, and twittering shrill and weak, the bat
 Joins in the chase. Nor is the chase in vain.
 For ever and anon the beetle dull
 Smites us with sudden stroke, stopping at once
 Its heavy hum; while moths of size and form
 And motion various flutter by, with plumes
 Less gorgeous, not less delicate, than theirs
 Whose painted wings the noontide flowers adorn.
 Now from the hollow trunk, its den, leaps forth
 The tawny wild-cat, fiercest of the beasts
 That roam in Britain's forests; wont on high
 To seize the rapid squirrel, or by guile

resembles that of a large spinning-wheel, that the Welch call this
 bird *aderyn y droell*, or the wheel-bird. It begins its song most
 punctually on the close of day; sitting usually on a bare bough.
 The noise is so very violent, as to give a sensible vibration to any
 little building it chances to alight on, and emit this species of note."
 Pennant's *British Zoology*, vol. i. p. 416, 417. See also White's
Naturalist's Calendar, p. 79.

Pluck

Pluck from its nest the unsuspecting dove,
Or to the ground descending thin the race
That bores the sandy warren. Thus from sea
To sea, from shore to shore, thirsting for spoil,
The pirate steers; now chafes o'er the waves
The merchantman in ever changing course
Tacking in vain; now lands his midnight crew
Havock and flames through some defenceless town
To spread; now, braving noon's indignant eye,
Sacks the lone village: squander'd o'er the plains
To every wind, the peasants pant; and oft
Snatching a glance reverted, mark the smoke
And fiery gleams that tell the tale of woe.
Forth from his cave beneath the brambly bank
Hastens the fox, bent on the feather'd prey
Rear'd at the distant hamlet. Creeping slow
The weasel, and in silence, through the fern
Steals on the dozing leveret. From her seat
She starts, and bears away the assailant fix'd—
Fast to her neck, and from the flowing vein
Sucking the vital current. Lo, she falls.
The puny murderer flinks into the brake
From the drain'd carcass, fated with the blood.

Why rush'd that horseman with impetuous course
Across the glade, still looking back ; while shook
The forest with the deep-toned bloodhound's roar ?
I know his deeds. Ere long on yonder plain
Again shall we behold him : though he strives
His chafers to mislead, and round these banks
Artful his circuit takes, there will he seek
The outlet of the wild. This day at noon
With staff and halter in his hand he stray'd
As watchful of the grazing tribes ; and seem'd
An herdsman bent his wandering colt to find,
And from the scanty common lead him home
To more abundant pasture. Other thoughts
Lay lurking in his breast. From prying gaze
Within the hollow lining of his coat
Cover'd, the musket by malignant art
For depredation form'd, in separate lengths
Disjointed, as musician parts his flute,
He bore. With never-erring skill, matured
By long experience, in the numerous crowd
The well-fed buck he mark'd ; singling at once
His victim, as each herb of flavour choice
With sapient nose oft shifting o'er the plain

He

He cropp'd, unconscious of impending fate.
Perch'd on the summit of the blasted oak
The raven eyed him (often had she traced
His purpose), and in silence ominous
Waited her offal portion of the prey.
Meanwhile, a shot delusive, in the woods
At distance due by sly confederate fired,
Alarm'd the keeper's ear. Instant he urged
From glade to glade the vain pursuit, and left
The endanger'd spot unguarded. The safe hour
The plunderer seized; the tube with speed restored
To native shape he charged, levell'd his aim,
And drew the trigger. Clang'd the steel, and flash'd
Destruction. Swift he dragg'd the bleeding spoil,
And plung'd the quivering limbs and branched crest
Deep in the brake, and fled. Bold he return'd
When twilight lent to guilt her dubious veil
At eve, prepared his booty to convey
To distant mart, where pamper'd luxury
With indiscriminate rage her dainties buys,
Regardless whence they come, or how procured.
But long, as when impatient nestlings peep,
Wide gaping, o'er their walls of moss, and chide

Clamorous their dam whom search of food delays ;
Long with enquiring stomach shalt thou wait,
O disappointed Alderman ! and strive
To still the cravings of the mighty void
With meaner prey, while sympathetic dread
Suggests the terrors thy purveyor feels !
For, roused by sudden trappings, ere the load
Is pack'd, across his steed the deer he throws,
And mounts in haste. For now their nightly rounds
The keepers hold ; and soon the ranging dogs
Sagacious note the deed, and touch the place
Of slaughter. With loud roar they tell the tale ;
And over hill and lawn scenting the blood,
By jolting agitation liquefied,
At intervals still dropping from the wound,
Through all his bends the frightened robber chase.
Mark where they come : eager behind them sweep
Their masters. From our sight lo all are lost,
Pursuers and pursued. Cross we this knoll
And meet them as they circle round the skirts
Of that impenetrable wood. There flies
The caitiff ! Nearer and still nearer borne
Hang on his steps his foes. And now his form
Shouting

Shouting they recognize, and fiercer drive
Their steeds. For long suspicious had they guess'd
His secret wiles ; and oft at dead of night
His cottage had they sought, and, arm'd with force
Of legal claims and just authority,
Entrance demanded, and with patient toil
Explored each dark recess, anxious to meet
Proofs of his rapine : but his wary fraud
Had baffled all their projects. Now his reign
Is closed. Hard prest he drops the deer : the bait
His foes retards not ; on himself they pour
Their utmost speed. Falls his o'erlabour'd horse
Headlong ; uninjured from its back he springs,
And plies his nimble feet, and hopes escape.
In vain : the forest shakes him from its woods
Indignant, and its murder'd habitants
Avenges. With strong gripe the keepers end
His fruitless struggles ; while the baying hounds
Leap round him, and, with rage and conquest flush'd,
Scarce from his trembling limbs their fangs refrain.

Ye sons of luxury, direr foe to man
Than sword or pestilential vapour, blush
And tremble as this tale of truth ye read,

Blush for your shame, and tremble for your guilt !
Be it enough that earth's remotest bounds,
That polar shores and equinoctial waves
Pay tribute to your board : be it enough
That at your beck in stifling dungeon pent,
Like Guinea's injured sons, o'er seas unknown
Wasted with pain the famish'd turtle weeps
Its miserable voyage ; at your beck
Stretch'd out for butchery feels its shelly mail
Rent from the flesh, of agonising life
Tenacious, while each mangled fragment heaves,
And crawling fibres quiver on the floor.
Spare yet the innocence of forests, spare
The untutor'd peasant ; bribe him not to flight
The majesty of law.—Have ye then sped,
Search'd out his weakness, and with fraudulent gold
Sapp'd his integrity ? Lo, train'd by crime
To crime, ere long he aims at nobler spoil ;
Plunders the fold, drives off the unguarded steed,
Arrests the traveller, writhes the midnight lock,
With murderous hand the couch of sleep invades,
Till, wearied by the deeds ye first inspired,
Avenging justice sweeps him from the earth.

WALK

WALK THE FOURTH.

E 4.

ARGUMENT.

An Autumnal Morning—Fieldfares—Address to them—
Appearance of a Forest in Autumn superior to its Effect
either in Spring or in Summer—Landscape-Painters in-
vited to study Chasteness and Harmony of colouring, and
Breadth and Proportion of Light and Shade, in Forests—
Illustration of the latter Subject from the Eruption of a
Volcano—Autumnal Harmony of Nature further exem-
plified—The Woodcock—Deer waiting for falling Acorns
—The Golden-crested Wren—Cottagers collecting Fuel—
An old Oak blown down—Contrast of wooded Hills near
at hand, in Sunshine, with a flat Distance in deep Shadow
—The Heron—Dovedale—Tutbury Castle—Mary Queen
of Scots—John of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster—The
Minstrel—The Love of Forests natural to Man—Mode in
which surviving Friends have praised departed Genius—
Praise of Forests—Author of the Task—Autumn originally
unknown—Eternal Spring shall resume her Reign.

WALK THE FOURTH.

A U T U M N.

BRIGHT gleams the ray of morn. The gentle frost
Has gemm'd with icy dew the grafs. In air
Floats the thin rime diffused; not as when dense
With wintry vapour its impervious fog
Blots out the neighbouring coverts, and each twig
Thickens with feathery silver, and the locks
Of peasant lost amid the dazzling gloom;
But twinkling in the sunbeam spreads its veil,
Softening each harder outline, and apace
Before the ascending radiance melts away.
Where in the hollow footsteps of the herd
The shower's cool reliques stagnate, crystal shoots
Start from the sides; and intersecting oft,

And

And link'd in union, while the bibulous earth
 Still from beneath the liquid prop withdraws,
 Hang their white network glistening o'er the void.
 Lo! on yon branch, whose naked spray o'ertops
 The oak's still clustering shade, the fieldfares sit
 Torpid and motionless, yet peering round
 Suspicious of deceit; at our approach
 They mount, and, loudly chattering from on high,
 Bid the wild woods of human guile beware.

Ye strangers *, banish'd from your native glades,
 Where tyrannous Frost with Famine leagued proclaims,
 "Who lingers, dies;" with many a risk ye gain
 The privilege to breathe our softer air,
 And glean our sylvan berries. O'er the breadth
 Of ocean from relentless skies, from wastes
 By winter petrified, from forests whelm'd
 Beneath their dazzling load, ye come to ask
 A transient hospitality. Nor force

* Fieldfares migrate hither in autumn from the northern parts of Europe, being forced thence by the excessive rigour of the season in those cold regions. See Pennant's *British Zoology*, vol. i. p. 304.

Nor fraud ye meditate : yet, roused at once,
The kite, the buzzard, and each hooked beak
And griping talon thirsteth for your blood.
The schoolboy, from his irksome toil set free,
Proud of the gun now first possess'd, on you
The first rude efforts of destruction tries.
He marks your station, steals beneath the shade,
Scarce dares with long suspended step to press
The ground, lest leaves should rustle ; trembles, pants,
With hope, and fear ; his disconcerted aim
Renews ; with faltering hand the trigger draws,
And at the sudden thunder starts dismay'd.
Even the dull rustic as he plods along
By hedgerow side, or in the forest roves,
Observes you, as ye pick your scanty food,
And whirls the dangerous pebble. What can guard,
Ye unoffending helpless visitants,
From snares and death your persecuted tribes ?
He, who upholds the archangels : He, who marks
With omnipresent eye the smallest form
That lives, with arm omnipotent sustains :
He, who inspired your flight from snow-clad wastes

To happier shores unknown ; and from the depths
Of sin and misery for desponding man
Has paved a path in mercy, and with voice
Of love divine bids the repentant soul
Rise heir of heaven, nor dread the gulph of death.

How richly varied is the scene ! In vain
Spring with her emerald verdure, and the tints
Of bloom from every tree and shrub and herb
Breathing its odours ; Summer's hand in vain,
Thickening with greens mature the woods, with wreaths
Of pendent woodbine linking bush to bush,
And scattering o'er the banks her blossom'd furze
Ardent with gold, would emulate the charms
Of waning Autumn. What though one short night
Of premature severity, one blast
Whirling the fleety hail, would strip the boughs,
As pestilence the crowded city thins ?
What though already on yon windy brow
The lime and ash with unresisting fear
Their station have deserted ? Unsubdued
Rises the mighty forest, and displays
Its splendid files. Seize we the present hour,

And

And view the fleeting glories ere they fade.
Mark the nice harmony which blends the whole
In one congenial mass, brilliant, yet chaste,
With every dye that stains the withering leaf
Glowing, yet not discordant. Hither come,
Ye sons of imitative art *, who hang
The fictions of your pencils on our walls,
And call them landscapes : where incongruous hues
Seem their constrain'd vicinity to mourn ;
Where gaudy green with gaudy yellow vies,
And blues and reds with adverse aspect glare.
Here deign to learn from nature. Hither come,
Ye sons of imitative art, who spot
With unconnected and unnumber'd lights
Your motley canvas ; where the eye in vain
Seeks for a resting-place, and vainly strives
To trace the marr'd design, 'midst dazzling specks
And universal glitter undecried.
Here deign to learn from nature : here, though late,

* It is scarcely necessary to say that the following lines refer only to the works of some particular painters, and are by no means intended to convey indiscriminate censure.

Learn the peculiar majesty which crowns
 The forest, when the slowly passing clouds
 Triple * preponderance of shadow spread,
 And separate † the broad collected lights

* The painters most skilled in the management of light, generally allow not above one quarter of the picture for the lights, including in this portion both the principal and secondary lights; another quarter is as dark as possible; the remaining half in middle tint. Sir Joshua Reynolds's Notes on Mr. Mason's Translation of Dufresnoy's Art of Painting, p. 98.

† In the grouping of lights there should be a superiority of one over the rest; they should be separated, and varied in their shapes; and there should not be less than three lights. The secondary lights ought, for the sake of harmony and union, to be of nearly equal brightness, though not of equal magnitude, with the principal. Sir J. Reynolds's Notes on Dufresnoy, p. 96. Yet neither any one of these secondary lights, nor all of them together, must come into any degree of competition with the principal mass of light. Sir J. Reynolds's Seven Discourses, p. 106. The highest finishing is labour in vain, unless at the same time there be preserved a breadth of light and shadow—the slightest sketch, where this breadth is preserved, will have effect. Notes on Dufresnoy, p. 99.

With

With corresponding gloom ; whether, beneath
 These oaks that crowd the darken'd foreground seen,
 Shine the illumined lawn and pasturing deer ;
 Or yon recess admits the fronting ray
 Between its dusky barriers ; or long gleams,
 Stretch'd o'er the tufted surface of the woods,
 Deepen the blackness of contiguous shade.

Thus with the rays of noon when Etna blends
 Her vollied flames, nor with contrasting depth
 Of smoke and sulphurous steam their glare surrounds,
 Scarce seen, scarce fear'd, the sickly blaze expires.
 'Wouldst thou survey her terrors ? Wait the hour,
 When from her caves projected pitchy clouds
 Rise ceaseless, and air, earth, and sea involve
 In more than midnight gloom. Then mark the burst
 Of brightness from the roaring crater mount
 To heaven ; behold the electric flash oblique *

Break

* Sir William Hamilton, in his Observations on Mount Etna, Vesuvius, and other Volcanos, mentions this phenomenon as a constant attendant on great eruptions. " Small ashes fell all day
 " at Naples. They issued from the crater of the Volcano, and
 " formed

Break through the darkness; view the exploded rocks*
 Trail their long light; prone down the mountain's side
 Watch the red deluge o'er the works of man,
 Hamlets and cities, towers, and cultured plains,
 In indiscriminate desolation roll'd,
 Plunge headlong into ocean; ocean's waves,
 Loud hissing, from the invading fires recoil†:

The

"formed a vast column as black as the mountain itself, so that
 "the shadow of it was marked out on the surface of the sea. Con-
 "tinued flashes of forked or zigzag lightning shot from this black
 "column." Ed. 2d, p. 37. See also p. 38, 39, and the note, and
 p. 46, 85. "I find in all the accounts of great eruptions mention
 "made of this sort of lightning, which is distinguished here by
 "the name of Ferilli." Ib. p. 164.

* "I have seen stones of an enormous size shot up to a great
 "height from Vesuvius. In 1767 a solid stone, measuring twelve
 "feet in height and forty-five in circumference, was thrown a
 "quarter of a mile from the crater." Sir William Hamilton's
 Observations, p. 49, note. He adds that "the eruption of 1767
 "was very mild in comparison with some others."

† The Earl of Winchelsea, in his account of the eruption of
 Mount Etna in 1669, quoted by Sir William Hamilton (Observa-
 tions,

The seaman shuddering in the distant bark
Hears the dire sound, and feels the reflux tide.

Nature, in all her works harmonious, blends
Extremes with soft gradation, and with tints
Kindred throughout her changeful robe adorns.

tions, p. 60) describes the stream of lava flowing from the mountain as fifteen miles in length, and seven in breadth. "It may be termed," he proceeds, "an inundation of fire, cinders, and burning stones, burning with that rage as to advance into the sea six hundred yards, and that to a mile in breadth; which I saw. And that which did augment my admiration was to see in the sea this matter like ragged rocks burning in four fathom water, two fathoms higher than the sea itself; some parts liquid, and throwing off the stones about it; which like a crust of a vast bigness, and red hot, fell into the sea every moment in some place or other, causing a great and horrible noise, smoke, and hissing in the sea."

During the eruption of Mount Vesuvius in June and July 1794, the lava ran from the side of the mountain in a torrent half a mile wide, and from twelve to forty feet high, through the middle of the town of Torre del Greco; destroying the houses and vineyards in its progress, and forming a new promontory twenty-four feet high, and extending six hundred and twenty-six feet into the sea. See Sir W. Hamilton's account of this eruption delivered to the Royal Society.

Bounds yon unbroken wood the level plain ?
Light groups detach'd and solitary trees
Unite them. Weave yon bushes o'er the hill
Uninterrupted thickets ? Furzy brakes
Aspire to meet them. Spreads the furzy brake ?
With varying breadth the intruding greenward winds,
And the rude mafs with velvet maze divides.
And lo, even now when with autumnal gold
She decks the lofty branches, on each twig
Of humbler growth the many-colour'd fruit
Mindful ſhe hangs. With ruddy cluſters bends
The thorn : with brighter ſcarlet glows the briar :
Scarce can the ſloe ſuſtain its purple load,
Not yet from taſte auſtere by froſt matured ;
While from the prickly ſhoots pale bryony,
Twined round the oft encircled ſtem, ſuſpends
Its gorgeous berries : rich in gloſſy balls,
Privet's dark ſpikes with trembling luſtre gleam.
Nor leſs the ground its hues accordant joins,
With faded leaves beſtrewn, and floating wings
Of ruſſet fern o'erſhadow'd, whence upſtarts
The woodcock ; ſhe who in Norwegian waſtes,
Or Lapland's birchen foreſts, near the ſwamp

Suck'd

Suck'd from the spongy soil her prey, and nursed
 Her progeny; till Winter's rapid car,
 On Summer's steps close * pressing, from his realms
 Warn'd her, and earth her probing beak repell'd.

As when the gunner, in his stubbly way
 Pausing his piece afresh to prime, suspends
 The uplifted flask, and his exploring ear
 Turns, if perchance the long-lost partridge calls:
 Or as, when midnight stills the Atlantic waves,
 The steersman, if a sound that seems to tell
 Of distant breakers float upon the breeze,
 Stands motionless, in deep attention lost:
 Why in fix'd attitude beneath yon oak
 Listen the deer? From morn to eve they stand
 Expectant of the falling acorn. Hark!
 From the bare bank it leaps. Quick to the sound
 At once they turn, and seize it; then resume
 Their posture. High above, the golden wren †
 Sports

* Spring and Autumn are hardly known to the Laplanders.—
 Scheffer's History of Lapland, p. 61.

† The golden-crested wren is the least of British birds. It may
 readily be distinguished not only by its size, but by the beautiful

Sports on the boughs; she who her slender size
 Vaunting, and radiant crest, half dares to vie
 With those gay wanderers *, whose resplendent wings
 With insect hum still flutter o'er the pride
 Of Indian gardens, while the hollow tongue
 Explores the flower, and drains the honied juice.

Now chiller evenings and the near approach
 Of winter from the anxious cottage draw
 Yon group in search of fuel. Youthful hands
 Gather the scatter'd sticks; or wield the pole
 Arm'd with light sickle, and the mouldering bough
 Pluck down with tiptoe efforts oft renew'd:

scarlet mark on the head, bounded on each side by a yellow line.
 It frequents woods, and is found principally on oak trees. Though
 so small a bird, it endures our winters. Pennant's British Zoology,
 vol. i. p. 379, 380.

* "Humming-birds subsist on the nectar or sweet juice of
 flowers—they never settle on a flower during the action of ex-
 tracting the juice; but flutter continually like bees, moving their
 wings very quick, and making a humming noise, whence their
 name." Latham's Synopsis of Birds, p. 770. "The above ac-
 count of the manners will in general suit all the birds of this
 genus." Ibid. p. 771. On the structure of the tongue of the
 humming-bird, see *ibid.* p. 745.

While the dead stump the sturdy peasant hews ;
 Or, looking watchful round lest prying eyes
 Observe him, from the oak by tempests torn
 Rends off the shiver'd ruin with its load
 Of leafy spray. Backward he throws his weight,
 And tugs with iron grasp ; in vain the branch
 Recoils with spring elastic, and in vain
 Still by tough splinters to the trunk adheres.
 Meantime yon boy in wanton mischief tears
 The ivy twisted in contortions rude
 Round the tall maple, and the stem divides
 With stroke malicious. Soon the verdant mass,
 Robb'd of its wonted nutriment, shall fade.
 Yet shall the lifeless tendrils still maintain
 Their grasp ; and, deaf to Spring's reviving call,
 To May's bright greens a dusky foil oppose.

Stranger, who gazest on its tangled bower,
 Where oft the owl, impatient of the blaze
 Pour'd from meridian ardours, dozed in gloom
 Impenetrable, then with flusker^{*} wings

Broke

* It is doubtful whether the word " flusker^{*}ing " be more than
 a provincial term. I venture however to use it in consequence of

Broke forth, when clamorous children faunter'd by;
 Mourn'st thou its ruin'd honours? Hither turn,
 And mark where, never more to vernal funs
 And showers responsive, prostrate on the earth
 A nobler ruin lies, yon oak, the growth
 Of unrecorded centuries. With hound
 And horn when Tudor through these coverts urged
 His game, the monarch oft in mid pursuit
 Stopp'd short; and to his nobles wondering round
 Pointed this mighty trunk, with royal praise
 Dwelt on its limbs majestic, and forgot,
 Enraptured with its shade, the flying deer.
 Ages roll'd on; and still, at distance view'd,
 Its shadowing canopy with sovereign state
 Rose o'er the forest, to the traveller's eye
 Awful. But Time, who cleft thy bulwarks, Rome,
 And sees with scorn the pilgrim search in vain
 The spot where Babylon stood, with force combined
 Of storm and blight and damps corrosive hook
 Its frame, curtail'd the boughs, the foliage thinn'd,

not knowing any other word in the language which precisely ex-
 presses the same idea; namely, the sound occasioned by a large bird
 bursting in alarm through thick foliage.

And

And mined its inmost heart. Yet long it met
The war, fore bruised, but dauntless; and its arms,
Shiver'd and bleach'd, as in defiance rear'd,
Frowning with semblance of primæval strength.
Till, as a state by slow corruption sapp'd,
Whence one by one the cankering pest withdraws
Each buttress of its grandeur, at the root
Decay'd it totter'd. The autumnal blast
Snapp'd the few slender strings that fix'd the shell,
Sad remnant of the massy trunk. The crash
Earth heard, and shudder'd; mindful of the hour
Foredoom'd ere time began, when all her pomp,
The boast of nature and the pride of art,
Shall sink for ever; when herself shall hear
The knell that calls her to her fiery grave,
Drink the last glimmerings of the expiring fun,
Close her last round, and fill her place no more.

How forcible the contrast! Light and gloom,
Beauty and grandeur with contending powers
Heighten the landscape! On the tufted heads
Of these steep woods that hasten down the slopes
With headlong plunge, eager to meet the vale,

A flood of radiance rests, brightens each tint
Autumnal, and reveals each break that marks
The indented surface : while yon low-hung clouds,
As some deep-laden fleet from India's shores
Moves sluggish o'er the main, their dusky wings
Expand ; and o'er the dim-discover'd meads,
Hamlets, and village towers o'er circling trees
Scarce raised, their awful shadow flinging broad,
• Purple the expanse beneath. There, where in curves
Now lost, at intervals now traced again,
A glimmering lustre of ambiguous hue,
As from some rippling stream reflected, plays
Obscurely through the darkness ; oft the heron,
Poised in Dove's rich meads, with patient guile
And pale gray plumes with watry blue suffused
Stands like a shadow : then with outstretch'd neck,
While near with sidelong pace the sportsman creeps,
Rises, and, steering to the distant fen,
Shrieks from on high, and flaps her solemn wings.
Hence northward to those misty heights the eye
Glances, between whose craggy sides confined,
Low in his native dale, with stream as pure

As melts from mountain snows Dove laves his rocks
 Wild as by magic planted, yet with grace *
 Of symmetry arranged ; now foaming darts
 Along the stony channel, tufted isles
 Now circles, now with glassy surface calm
 Reflects the impending glories of his hills.
 Or turn we southward, where on yonder cliff
 High o'er his ampler wave projecting shine
 Those ivy-mantled towers † ; towers once with sighs
 Sadden'd of captive Mary, jocund once
 With minstrelsy, when Lancaster convened
 The throng of barons in his festive hall.

* “ From the description given of Dovedale, even by men of
 “ taste, we had conceived it to be a scene rather of curiosity than
 “ of beauty. We supposed the rocks were formed into the most
 “ fantastic shapes ; and expected to see a gigantic display of all
 “ the conic sections. But we were agreeably deceived. The
 “ whole composition is chaste, and picturesquely beautiful, in a
 “ high degree.” Mr. Gilpin's Observations on the Mountains and
 Lakes of Cumberland, &c. vol. ii. p. 228.

† Tutbury Castle, once the prison of Mary Queen of Scots ;
 and in earlier times the residence of John of Gaunt.

Stretch'd

Stretch'd in her cell with pallid cheek the Queen,
And tears fast dropping from her beamless eyes,
Wore the long months of grief. With anguish faint
If ever the fresh gale she sought to breathe,
Frown'd the bleak battlement and guarded wall,
And mark'd her limits. Through each stony chink,
Form'd on the near approaching foe to pour
The arrowy storm, on these wild banks she gazed :
While Fancy, minister of woe, with hand
Officious to her view presented still
Gay troops of forest deer unprison'd airs
Inhaling, and, as frolic sport inspired,
Bounding unfetter'd. To new dungeon tost
From dungeon, her unpitying rival's ear
With fruitless prayer she plied. The cold excuse,
The taunt, the studied silence of neglect,
Silence than cold evasion and than taunt.
More keen, she bore : yet dreams of brighter hours
Still cherish'd ; and still hoped, and hoped in vain,
To burst the chains which envious hate had twined ;
Till Freedom on the sable scaffold's height
Stood hand in hand with all-subduing Death,

To

To end her bondage. Other scenes the bard
Crown'd with high harpings ; when unnumber'd lights
Illumed the fretted roof, the pendent arms
That deck'd the wall ; and glowing through the rows
Of adverse windows, where the crystal plain
Art with rich tracery spread, proclaim'd afar
The princely feast of Lancaster. He rose :
Mirth ceased her tumult ; every sound was hush'd ;
All from their seats bent forward. Age and youth,
Warriors, and gorgeous dames enraptured heard
His melody. And when his potent lord,
'Gainst the great day when emulous knights should
couch

The lance careering on the lifted field,
Bade him the song prepare, these sylvan depths,
These silent glades instant he pierced, and hung
Even on yon oak his lyre ; then musing stray'd ;
Then vocal tried the meditated lay,
And swept the strings ; while gazed the listening deer,
And the woods rang with harmony divine.

Man loves the forest. To the general flame
My breast is not a stranger. I could rove

At

At morn, at noon, at eve, by lunar ray,
In each returning season, through your shades,
Ye reverend woods! could visit every dell,
Each hill, each breezy lawn, each wandering brook,
And bid the world admire; and when at last
The song were closed, each soothing spot again
Could seek, and tell again of all its charms.
But let me check the partial strain, nor swell
With praises indiscriminate and minute
The long description; lest attending youth
And virgin innocence outwearied loathe
The injudicious rapture, and contemn
What else had touch'd their hearts. When Genius dies
(I speak what Albion knows), surviving friends,
Eager his bright perfections to display
To the last atom, echo through the land
All that he ever did, or ever said,
Or ever thought; recount the coats he wore,
Who made his wig, who served him with rappee;
Whether 'twas March, or April, when he told
The story of the pig that cross'd the lane,
And tripp'd the ill-fated huckster in the mire;

Whether

Whether he cream'd his teacup first, or when
'Twas fill'd and fugar'd; whether trout or pike,
Veal or boil'd chicken, pleas'd his palate most:
Then for his writings—search each desk and drawer,
Sweep his portfolio, publish every scrap
And demi-scrap he penn'd; beg, borrow, steal
Each line he scribbled, letter, note, or card,
To order shoes, to countermand a hat,
To bid his servant bottle off the ale,
To make enquiries of a neighbour's cold,
Or ask his company to supper. Thus,
Fools! with such vile and crumbling trash they build
The pedestal on which at length they rear
Their huge Colossus, that beneath his weight
'Tis crush'd and ground; and leaves him dropt afloat,
Scarce raised above the height of common men.
I would not praise you thus, ye forest wilds!
With warm yet sober tints, with pencil true
To just discrimination, yet averse
To load the o'erlabour'd canvas, I would paint
Your choicest scenes. O could I wake the lyre
Like him *, who lingering on the banks of Ouse,

* Cowper.

To nature faithful and to nature's King,
Pursues the noblest of poetic aims,
That only aim which gives the poet's lay
A title to the meed of genuine praise ;
Who, blending * in his song with honest art
The faithful monitor's and poet's care,
Seeks to delight that he may mend mankind,
And while he captivates exalt the soul !
He sweeps the lyre : one hand excites the strings,
Whence starts each glowing image that presents
Perfect as life the charms that deck the face
Of earth ; the other, with symphonious touch,
Rouses the moral chords that swell the heart,
And lift it to its God. O were my notes,
Ye woodlands, with his sacred fervour warm'd,
Sweet as his music ; to the wretch whom pride
Tortures, whom avarice goads, or thirst of power
Long days and sleepless nights has scorch'd ; to her
Whom dragg'd in triumph at his chariot wheels
Imperious Dissipation whirls through life,
And hurries from the nursery to the grave

* See Cowper's Poems, edit. 4th, vol. i. p. 179, near the top.

Without one interval of thought, or time
To ask, Who placed me here; why was I form'd;
What shall I be hereafter? I would speak
The calm that stills your shadowy depths, bids pause
Each artery, creeps along each conscious limb,
Each rebel passion chains, and through the soul
Breathes holy peace and universal love.
For since the globe first roll'd, in every land
Your shades, ye forests, the deluded heart
To heavenly meditation still have call'd;
And every song that glorified your God
Have heard with eager gladness. Ye with joy,
Fresh from his Maker's hand when man arose,
Saw him in wondering homage kneel; ye bade
Your yet unpractised echoes swell the sound
High as the Eternal's throne, when praise first broke
The silence of the new-created world.
Ye, when with persecuting vengeance Rome,
Pagan or Papal, from the haunts of men
Chased those whom steadfast truth forbade to bow
Submission to her mandates; ye received
The fugitives, with hospitable screen

Shelter'd their miseries, and with mingling boughs,
Vocal to prayer, a sylvan fane supplied.

O yet, even yet, your sacred influence breathe,
Oft as I tread your leaf-strewn paths ; to rest
Lull each tumultuous wish ; with reverent awe
My heart inspire ; and, as your stately growth
Pursues its heaven-directed aim, exalt
My thoughts from earth, and point them to the skies !

Man loves the forest. Since in Eden's groves
His fire, yet innocent, enraptured view'd
" Insuperable height of loftiest shade *,
" Cedar, and pine, and fir, and branching palm,
" A sylvan scene," man has the forest loved.
Those groves no autumn knew : eternal spring
With all the blessings of the varied year
In rich profusion crown'd them. But when Death
Seized on his prey, fall'n man, Destruction stretch'd
Across the woods her sceptre. With the axe
She fells them ; with the tempest by the roots
Uptears them ; by the wasting scythe of Time

* Milton's Paradise Lost, book iv. line 138—140.

She lays them low ; and yearly o'er their boughs
Still gay with life a robe funereal flings.
Yet shall unfading Spring her sway resume
In that new promised earth, promised by voice
Of power unbounded and unfailing truth ;
Where by no sin to desolation doom'd,
(For sin shall not be there), no storms annoy'd,
No violence ravaged, no decay impair'd,
Thy works, great God, for such thy will, shall stand
Firm through the ages of eternity !

18

W. T. W.

The following is a list of the names of the persons who have been

admitted to the office of the Secretary of the Board of

Education, since the last meeting of the Board, on the 1st of

January, 1880, to the 1st of January, 1881.

At the meeting of the Board, on the 1st of January, 1880,

the following persons were admitted to the office of the

Secretary of the Board of Education, since the last meeting of

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WALK THE FIFTH.

ARGUMENT.

Prognostics of Snow—Man ignorantly repines at its Fall—
A Traveller—apprehends a Storm, and previously arms
himself to encounter it—is caught by it on the middle of
a Forest—The Storm at length ceases—Address to those
who are struggling with Difficulties in Life—Patient
Hope exemplified.

WALK THE FIFTH.

WINTER.—SNOW.

AT length the expected snows descend. The earth
 Her axis thrice has circled since the blast
 Grew keen, still veering eastward; and when shone
 The firmament on high with cloudless light,
 Incumbent on the gray horizon's verge
 A settled gloom has hung. This morn, when first
 O'er yon bank climb'd the sun, a fleecy shower
 Tinging with thin-spread white the frozen brook,
 The bareworn track, and close-depastured plain,
 Accompanied his course. Ere long he chafed
 The congregated vapours: yet, while noon
 Blazed forth refulgent, from some half-form'd cloud,

Whose filmy veil by careless eyes unseen
Dimm'd, yet scarce dimm'd, the azure vault of heaven,
Descending oft the solitary flake
Foretold the secret purpose of the skies.
Now mid-day warmth declines: dense haze obscures
The turbid atmosphere: the clouds advance,
Not as the vehicles of rain, disposed
In separate masses, and of varying hue;
Not like the mansions of rebounding hail,
Lurid and dark; nor those where thunder dwells,
Of wildest forms, scowling with purple dyes,
And 'gainst the nether streams of air propell'd
By their own currents; but of aspect dun,
Of texture uniform, and blending quick
In one unbroken surface, onward move
In firm array, and load the rising gale.
Across the whole ethereal arch they stretch
Their dusky mantle; and while louder sounds
And louder still the wind's tumultuous voice,
Now pausing, now with long and hollow swell
Redoubling fierce, their fleet stores discharge.
On the fast whitening world impatient man

Gazes

Gazes repining ; and already views
The plough with forked handles through the drift
Projecting in the unfinish'd furrow rust ;
The oxen doom'd to sloth ; the rapid waste
Of haystack lessening duly morn and eve.
Nor thinks that Heaven, oft kindest when with signs
Of wrath it lowers, sends forth the loaded blast
With merciful commission ; bids the snows
Brood genial o'er the glebe, from blighting frost
Shield infant harvests, and the stiffen'd joints
Of beast and wearied hind prepare by rest,
Salubrious though constrain'd, for future toil.

While thus the echoing tempest beats abroad
Beneath the impervious covert of this wood
Of antient hollies, whose umbrageous heads
The gusts of Autumn have in vain assail'd,
Range we secure, and view the distant scene.

Mark on that road, whose unobstructed course
With long white line the unburied furze divides,
Yon solitary horseman urge his way.
He, not unmindful of the brooding storm,
Ere yet by strong necessity compell'd

Of pressing occupation he exchanged
The blazing hearth, the firm-compacted roof,
For naked forests and uncertain skies,
With wise precaution arm'd himself to meet
The Winter's utmost rage. In filken folds
Twice round his neck the handkerchief he twined.
His legs he cased in boots of mighty size,
And oft experienced strength; warm'd through and
through

In chimney-corner; and with glossy face
Prepared descending torrents to repel,
As roll the round drops from the silvery leaf
Of rain-besprinkled colewort, or the plumes
Of seagull sporting in the broken wave.
Then o'er his limbs the stout great-coat he drew,
With collar raised aloft, and threefold cape
Sweep below sweep in wide concentric curves
Low down his back dependent; on his breast
The folds he cross'd, and in its destin'd hole
Each straining button fix'd; erect he stood,
Like huge portmanteau on its end uprear'd.
Fearless he sallied forth; nor yet disdain'd

The

The heartening draught from tankard capp'd with foam,
By host officious to the horseblock borne
With steady hand, and eloquently praised ;
While lingering on the step his eye he turn'd
To every wind, and mark'd the embattled clouds
Ranging their squadrons in the fullen East.
How fares he now ? Caught on the middle waste,
Where no deep wood its hospitable gloom
Extends ; no friendly thicket bids him cower
Beneath its tangled roof ; no lonely tree
Prompts him to seek its leeward side, and cleave,
Ereft and into narrowest space compress'd,
To the bare trunk, if haply it may ward
The driving tempest ; with bewilder'd haste
Onward he comes. " Hither direct thy speed ;
" This sheltering grove—" He hears not ! Mark his
head

Oblique, presented to the storm ; his hand,
Envelop'd deep beneath the inverted cuff,
With ineffectual grasp strives to confine
His ever flapping hat ; the cold drench'd glove
Clings round the imprison'd fingers. O'er his knees

His

His coat's broad skirt, scanty now proved too late,
He pulls and pulls impatient, muttering wrath
At pilfering tailors. Baffled and perplex'd,
With joints benumb'd and aching, scarce he holds
The rein, scarce guides the steed with breathless toil
O'erpower'd, and shrinking sideways from the blast.
Mark how that steed, with icy mane, and head
Depress'd, and quivering ears now forward bent,
Now backward swiftly thrown, and offering still
Their convex penthouse to the shifting gale ;
Mark how that steed, on indurated balls
Of snow upraised, like schoolboy rear'd on stilts,
Labours unbalanced ; the fallacious prop,
Now this, now that, breaks short : with sudden jerk
He sinks, half falling ; and recovering quick,
On legs of length unequal staggers along.
Trembles his rider : while the snow upheaves
In drifts athwart his course projected broad ;
Or o'er the uncover'd gravel rattling sweeps,
Caught up in sudden eddies, and aloft,
Like smoke, in suffocating volumes whirl'd.
The road he quits unwary, wandering wide

O'er the bleak waste, midst brushwood wrapt in snow,
Down rough declivities and fractured banks,
Through miry plasnes, cavities unseen,
And bogs of treacherous surface ; till afar
From all that meets his recollection borne,
Dismay'd by hazards scarce escaped, and dread
Of heavier perils imminent, he stands
Dismounted, and aghast. Now Evening draws
Her gathering shades around ; the tempest fierce
Drives fiercer. Chill'd within him sinks his heart,
Panting with quick vibrations. The wild blast
Appall'd he hears, thinks on his wife and babes,
And doubts if ever he shall see them more.
But comfort is at hand ; the skies have spent
In that last gust their fury. From the west
The setting sun with horizontal gleam
Cleaves the dense clouds ; and through the golden
breach
Strikes the scathed oak, whose branches peel'd and bare
'Gainst the retiring darkness of the storm
With fiery radiance glow. The traveller views
The well-known landmark, lifts to heaven his eyes
Swimming

Swimming with gratitude, the friendly track
Regains, and speeds exulting on his way.

O ye, whom struggling on life's craggy road
With obstacles and dangers, secret foes
Supplant, false friends betray, disastrous rage
Of elements, of war, of civil broils
Brings down to Poverty's cold floor, while grief
Preys on the heart, and dims the sinking eye;
Faint not! There is who rules the storm, whose hand
Feeds the young ravens, nor permits blind chance
To close one sparrow's flagging wing in death.
Trust in the Rock of Ages. Lo, even now
He speaks, and all is calm. Or if to prove
Your inmost soul the hurricane still spreads
Its licensed ravages, He whispers hope,
Earnest of comfort; and through blackest night
Bids keen-eyed Faith on heaven's pure sunshine gaze,
And learn the glories of her future home.

So when the son of patience heard the wreck
Of all his fortunes, camels, oxen, flocks,
Sons, daughters, all in one short hour o'erwhelm'd;
And ere each messenger his tale of grief

Had

Had closed, beheld another still succeed
With wilder eyeballs, cheeks more deadly pale,
More trembling lips, portending heavier woes :
Each limb when with corrosive tooth disease
Gnaw'd to the bone : when scoffing friends arraign'd
His uprightness : when she who should have pour'd
Balm on his wounds, his comfort, mock'd his pangs
With venom'd taunts—" Still dost thou boast thy
" faith ?

" Renounce the ungrateful Power thou serv'st in vain ;

" Defy his malice, shelter'd in the grave——"

His head to earth the sufferer bow'd, with hands

Prest on his bosom ; yet his eyes upraised

In hope towards heaven. " Father of all," he cried,

" Thy will be done ! All was thy gift ; thine own

" Thou hast resumed. Blest be thy hand that gave ;

" And——peace, my heart !—blest when it takes

" away !

" Yet these poor limbs, of swarming worms the spoil,

" New life shall clothe, and rear them from the dust.

" Thou livest, my Redeemer ! At the hour

" In thy decrees ordain'd, careering clouds

" Shall

“ Shall speak thine advent : earth beneath thy tread

“ Shall shrink ; this voice shall hymn thy love, these

“ knees .

“ Adore thy power, these eyes behold their God !”

WALK THE SIXTH.

ARGUMENT.

A previous Thaw described—Frost returns—Hannibal ascending the Alps—A Forest Brook traced—The Effects of Frost upon it—The Norwegian Traveller—The Wild-Duck—The Snipe—Cloud on a Mountain—Story of a Forest Youth—Naked Woods—Winter Appearance of the Oak—Ash—Birch—Yew—Ivy—Holly—The Fox-glove—Browsing of Deer—Cottage-Children assembling to gather the Branches—Effects of Winter—The never-ceasing Speed of Time compared with the unrelenting Fury of War—A Forest Pool frozen—Disappointment of the Cattle—Lessons inculcated by the several Seasons—The Consequences of neglecting the Voice of Nature and of Revelation—The Deluge.

WALK THE SIXTH.

WINTER.—FROST.

THE fleecy mantle which of late conceal'd
 The lawns, and burying deep the furzy brake
 Display'd, upheaved in undulating mounds,
 A rude resemblance of the forms below,
 (As earth of old in crumbling hillocks rais'd
 The new form'd tribes of quadrupeds disclosed *),
 Is vanish'd. From the south dissolving gales
 Blew ; the snows felt their influence. In the woods,
 Humid and comfortless, from dawn to eve
 Were heard incessant drippings, pattering loud

* See Milton's account of the creation of the different quadrupeds, *Paradise Lost*, book vii. line 453—472.

When the wind moved the branches. The soft mafs
Beneath of every drop the impreſſion took,
Pierced into hollows numerous as the cells
That guard the luſcious treasures of the bee.
Oft from ſome broad flat branch a gather'd load
Of ſnow ſlid looſen'd, and with leaden ſound
Sunk buried in the unrefiſting floor.
Soon through the leſſening weight the elastic gorſe
Its fullen ſhoots, by conſtrast darker, puſh'd.
Soon on the level plain green ſpots emerged,
Where raiſed the buſy ant or delving mole
Its ſubterranean dwelling: ſloppy pools
In the ſurrounding pulp lay ſtagnant. Streams
Trickled from every bank; and down the hills
Spread ſheety o'er the ſlopes, or ruſh'd amain
In the deep gullies. Swell'd the turbid brook;
And oft by congregated piles of ice
Obſtructed, raged aloud, and ſtrew'd the vale
With fragments. Of the univerſal white
No ſpeck was left, ſave where in lonely dell,
Fronting the north, amid the general rout
The drift in ſtation ſtill maintain'd, and ſeem'd

To wait for reinforcements from the skies.
Thus when her standard civilising Art
Plants on some barbarous shore, to mountains bleak
And glens and fastnesses his warrior sons
The angry Genius of the waste withdraws:
There bids them, from the influence abhorr'd
Of Science free, their sanguinary rites,
Their manners rude, and savage laws uphold;
Till fate once more shall pour them from their caves,
Impatient o'er their long lost plains again
To spread the veil of ignorance and night.
Earth of its load was lighten'd, and absorb'd
The moisture; sunny gleams and breezy air
The surface dried. Now Frost again ascends
His throne; and kindling with peculiar glow
Heaven's cloudless vault, and fixing firm the ground,
Crisp to the tread, from hot and crowded rooms
Calls us his bracing atmosphere to breathe,
And witnesses his invigorating power.

Touch'd by his cheering energy the heart
Beats livelier; the cheek reddens; through the frame,
While yet one destined partner of our track

Loitering within retards us, shoots a glow
Of buoyant eagerness: we spring, and leap,
And beat the ground, impatient of delay.
While Fancy seems with headlong course to scour
The vale, darts o'er the plain, pierces the woods
That shag yon slope, and on the naked brow
Pants, and with joy the fresher breeze inhales.
Thus when his host o'er Alps opposed in vain
The Carthaginian led, the last ascent
Labouring o'er icebuilt rocks as now they trod,
Gasping for breath the way-worn myriads paused.
Its bulk each wearied elephant reclined,
Uncurl'd its trunk, and drank the eternal snows.
Impatient of a moment lost the Chief
Press'd forward to the summit; flung an eye
Of transport o'er the wide-spread realms beneath;
Then turn'd, and frown'd, and call'd his lingering van;
Then gazed again on Italy: while Hope
Bade him with glance prophetic mark the stream
Of Trebia choked with dead; bade him in thought
View Thrasymene's red waves o'er legions roll'd,
Sweep Cannæ's field, and shake the towers of Rome.

Bend we our steps beside this forest brook,
And trace its windings. In yon flat morafs,
Where fpiry rufhes in divergent files
Rife fledged with rime, where many a ftunted bufh,
Alder or fallow, cropt by nibbling deer,
Betrays the dampnefs of the foil beneath,
From fecret fprings it rifes. Ifsuing thence
Awhile in naked channel o'er the plain
It wanders; now in fhort and fudden turns
Twifting round narrow points, as though it fled
Back to its fource; now in extended curves
Sweeping; now glistening in long reaches; now
With fretted furface and complaining found
Hurrying down bright cafes. Thence fwift it dives
Into this fylvan glen. Mark how it whirls
In circling eddies round that alder's root;
And far within the brink, where half congeal'd
Lingers the foam, the trout's dark hold prepares:
Whence, as from couchant ambufh on the fawn
Loitering befide the jungle * fprings the pard,

* The vafthickets in the Eaft Indies, in which leopards and other wild beafts lurk, are known by the appellation of Jungles.

While brightening with success his spotted sides
Glisten; the speckled plunderer of the deep,
When June awakes her insect tribes, shall dart
Fierce on the prey, while with unpractised wings
It sports and flutters o'er the dimpled stream.
Here, the flat turf with easy flexure meets
The wave; abrupt with contrast bold descends
The adverse side, whence starts the aspiring ash,
Or time-worn maple, thorn, or finewy oak
Deep-fix'd, and with its wreathed roots o'erhangs
The cavern'd margin. View the marly cliff,
Its base by oozing springs with frostwork glazed,
Various beyond the forms which fancy weaves:
Where crystal columns glitter; and disposed
Tier above tier, pellucid cornices,
With plummy darts and sparkling gems emboss'd,
'Tell to what height the current lately raised
Its ampler swell, and with diminish'd flood
Sunk gradual. Thus when Rome o'er British plains
The tide of conquest roll'd, her barrier wall,
Now from Bodotrian shores to Glotta's beach *

* The Firths of Clyde and Forth.

Stretch'd,

Stretch'd, now to Solway's sandbanks and the waves
Of coal-discolour'd Tyne withdrawn, disclosed
Where valour's patriot arm her bounds curtail'd,
And chased her baffled eagle from its prey.
Here, where o'er pebbly shallows frets the stream
With murmuring speed, a narrow range of ice
Grows to the edge, or round the uncover'd stone
Concretes; or fringed with points projecting far,
Circles the gravelly island by the force
Of floods upraised. There, where the deeper reach
Spreads smooth, from side to side the pavement firm
Stretches, nor hides the gliding rill beneath:
Or by the stream deserted rears in air
Delusive bridges, to the heedless foot
Of deer, or stranger hasting o'er the wild,
Dangerous, and loudly crashing in their fall.

So when o'er Norway's rocks the mountaineer,
Forming on high the giddy pathway, meets
Some rifted chasm, in whose unfathom'd depths
The cataraët foams, scarce heard above, and whirls
Its clouds of rising vapour; o'er the void
The wither'd birch by storms upturn he throws.

Ere long within the bark * the treacherous wood
Moulders; and leaves the rind, a specious shell,
Bridging the gulf. Beneath the traveller's weight
The specious shell breaks short. He shrieks unheard,
Falls undeplord, by pointed crags below
Awaited, and by torrents to the sea
Swept headlong. Midst her babes his widow sits
Pensive, and eyes the snow-clad hill in vain.

Lo! from its haunt, by crowding alders screen'd,
Where mantling in the still unfrozen flood
Aquatic weeds breathe warmth, at our approach
Alarm'd on sounding wings the wild duck soars,
And plies to distant solitudes her course.
The snipe flies screaming from the marshy verge,

* The bark of the birch has the property of being more durable than the wood which it envelops. When M. Maupertuis, in his expedition to measure a degree of latitude, traversed the birchen forests of Lapland, in which numbers of trees lay uprooted by winds; he found, on examining those which had been long blown down, that the substance of the wood was entirely gone, and that the apparently solid trunk consisted only of a shell of bark.

And

And towers in airy circles o'er the wood,
Still heard at intervals; and oft returns,
And stoops, as bent to 'light; then wheels aloft
With sudden fear, and screams, and stoops again,
Her favourite glade reluctant to forsake.
So on thy steeps, Helvellyn, when the air
Stagnates in noontide calm, a cloud reclines.
Eddying amid thy rocks ere long a breeze
Disturbs its rest. Unwilling from its couch
The vapour moves: now, by the gale upborne,
Soars buoyant; now, oft as the gulf has spent
Its force, with glad precipitance subsides,
And hangs and lingers on the attractive brow.

Once by yon poplars, through whose twinkling shade
With fruitless glance the oft-reflected beam
Struggled, nor reach'd the dusky flood beneath,
An ancient mill arose. The restless wheel
Scatter'd the dashing wave amid the gloom,
And broke the noonday silence of the wood.
'Twas there a youth with care fraternal sooth'd
A much-loved sister, while their mutual tears
A parent's loss deplored. One summer eve,

As from short absence he return'd, her shrieks,
Shrieks as though racking pangs o'er life prevail'd,
He heard. The whirling millstone, as she moved
Incautious, seized her arm, shiver'd the bone,
And crush'd each muscle. The remorseless gripe
He loosed. Art lent its healing aid in vain.
Nine days in anguish o'er her couch he hung;
The tenth he closed her eyes. The murderous stone,
The floor still spotted with a sister's blood,
The conscious poplars, and the fatal stream
He could no more behold. His native land
He left for ever; stemm'd the western main;
And bent in depths of solitude to hide
His grief, on Pennsylvania's utmost bounds,
Where to man's heaven-appointed rule her sons
Subject the untamed wilderiness, prepared
To rear his dwelling. The stupendous scene,
Unlike the humbler wild that gave him birth,
Amazed he view'd, the interminable waste,
The woods of giant growth, the piny swamp
Darkening the humid air: and oft would note
Curious the unknown wings that cross'd the shade,

And

And mark the scaly serpent as he slunk
 Through rustling leaves, or darting onward shook
 The warning rattle *; or beside the roots
 Of some time-honour'd trunk in spiral folds
 Coil'd motionless, his fascinating eye
 Fix'd on the conscious victim perch'd above.
 Chain'd by the potent glance, the helpless prey
 With piteous cries and wildly ruffled plumes

* That the Rattlesnake frequents the latitude of Pennsylvania, appears from Carver's Travels through the interior Parts of North America, 2d ed. p. 43; and from Long's Voyages and Travels of an Indian Interpreter, p. 149. It is indeed found as far northward as lat. 49. See Long's Voyages, p. 159. The power which this animal possesses of *charming* his prey by fixing his eye upon it, is asserted by various witnesses; and its effect is thus described by Catesby. "The animals, particularly birds and squirrels, which
 " principally are its prey, no sooner spy the snake, than they skip
 " from spray to spray, hovering and approaching gradually nearer
 " to their enemy, regardless of any other danger; but with dis-
 " tracted gestures and outcries descend, though from the top of
 " the loftiest trees, to the mouth of the snake, who openeth his
 " jaws, takes them in, and in an instant swallows them." History of Carolina, vol. ii. p. 41.

Flutter'd

Flutter'd from bough to bough, descending still,
 Nor shunn'd the jaws of death that gaped below.
 Meanwhile of rugged logs * his cot he raised,

And

* In the third volume of the *Memoirs of the Literary and Philosophical Society of Manchester*, a very curious and interesting account of the mode of establishing settlements in the remote parts of Pennsylvania is given by Dr. Rush of Philadelphia. Speaking of a settler in the woods, Dr. Rush says, p. 184: " His first object
 " is to build a small cabin of rough logs for himself and his family.
 " A coarser building, adjoining to this cabin, affords shelter to a
 " cow and a pair of poor horses. The labour of erecting these
 " buildings is succeeded by that of killing the trees on a few
 " acres of ground near his cabin. This is done by cutting a
 " circle round the trees two or three feet from the ground. The
 " ground around these trees is then ploughed, and Indian corn
 " planted in it."

Mr. Smyth, in a *Tour in the United States of America*, 8vo. London 1784, speaks as follows. " The general mode of clearing
 " the land in this country, where timber is of no value and labour
 " is of great, is by cutting a circle round the tree through the
 " bark quite to the wood before the sap rises, which kills it,
 " And they cultivate the ground below immediately, leaving the
 " trees

And stopp'd each chink with moss, lest searching rains
 Or snows by winter's eddying gusts impell'd
 Should drench his nightly couch : then from the soil
 Clear'd the rough brushwood, and round every stem
 Of ampler girth the fatal circle drew.

Blighted and wan the vernal foliage mourn'd
 Its intercepted nutriment, and strew'd
 The ground, as when the gale of autumn whirls
 The leafy shower ; the solitary trunks
 Frown'd on the rising harvest. Time ere long
 Loosen'd their roots, and tempests on the plain
 The thundering downfall hurl'd : the midnight crash
 Startled the forest. Each succeeding spring

“ trees to rot standing, which happens within a very few years ;
 “ and they never bear leaves more. A large field in this situation
 “ makes a most singular, striking, and tremendous appearance.
 “ It would seem indeed dangerous to walk in it, as the trees are
 “ of a prodigious height and magnitude ; vast limbs and branches
 “ of enormous size impending in awful ruins from a great height,
 “ sometimes breaking off, and frequently whole trees falling to the
 “ ground with a horrible crash, the sound of which is increased
 “ and protracted by the reverberation of the surrounding echoes.”

Vol. i. p. 94, 95.

Beheld

Beheld the waste retire. The pastured field,
The emerald meadow, and the waving gleam
Of corn by breezes moved, touch'd with delight
The owner's breast, and sooth'd what yet remain'd
Of antient sorrows. But his opening bliss
Was soon to close. With malice unprovoked
And thirst of plunder fired, an Indian band,
What time no pitying moonbeam spoke their guile,
Stole on his sleep. At once with savage yell
The war-whoop echoed from the woods; the torch
Flung frequent seized the roof; the shiver'd doors
Sunk from the stroke; the shriek of death was heard;
And life's last drops the gashing tomahawk drain'd.

Climb we this brow; the groves, whose naked scenes
Still have their charms, invite us. In array
Compact they stand, a various host; as when
The Empress of the north her subject tribes
Combines for war, the much-enduring Rus
Slow-paced, the Kalmuck glorying in his speed,
The dwarfish Laplander, Livonian huge,
Kamchatkan proud of his night-piercing eye,
Siberia's shaggy sons, Circassia's race

For

For beauty famed, and Samoeide and Finn
Scarce graced with human feature. Mark yon oak,
Fix'd central in the opening lawn; while ranged
Irregularly round to distance due
The subject woods retire. His rugged roots
Upheave the soil. His huge and furrow'd trunk,
Bulging with many a rough protuberance,
The lapse attests of numerous ages, fled
With all their generations. Deeply scorch'd,
Pierced, and snapt short, his top records a blast
Wing'd with tempestuous lightning, and with rage
Of Alpine storm impell'd. Projected wide
O'er the bare plain with horizontal stretch,
His arms enormous, girt with wither'd leaves,
And tufted still with misleto, no more
By Druid hands and golden sickle cropt,
Rear their abrupt contortions; and uphold
With firm support the thickly-woven spray.
Not so that lofty ash, from yonder group
Advanced; the stem, patch'd with dark mosses, lifts
Its flowing line; in wavy sweeps diverge
The pendent branches, and their points upturn

Studded

Studded with fable gems, gems loth to yield
The leaves they shroud to April's fickle gale.
Close by its side more pendent droops the birch,
With silver bark in flaky stripes detach'd
Conspicuous, and in swelling veins prepares
Its vinous juice. Behind, the dark yew frowns
In ever-during vesture wrapt; and vaunts
Its boughs elastic, once of Albion deem'd
The bulwark, when her sons, at Freedom's voice,
On Kent's white cliffs and Cumbrian hills array'd,
Drew the long bow, and pointed shafts repell'd
Invading Gaul, and Caledonia's race.
With equal pride its umbrage unimpair'd
The ivy boasts; not as when, blotch'd by art,
With garish tints it decorates the wall
Of painted summer-house, or trim alcove:
But midst its native thickets flings its shoots
Dark-robed; and round the thorn's imprison'd trunk
Twisting in hairy volumes, spreads its veil,
And loads the boughs with verdure not their own.
But foremost of the troop whose hardy files
Close ranged, thy wrath, despoiling Autumn, scorn,

The

The holly glows ; midst summer's gaudy bowers
Dull and unnoticed ; now, when winter's voice
Roars through the woods, with native coral bright,
And armed leaves : as virtues in thy glare,
Prosperity, long torpid and unseen,
When Fortune rolls her adverse waves, burst forth
Resplendent. Now its solitary cone
On pale gray trunk it raises : now combines
Its crowded tops and intermingling stems
In social groups : now stretches o'er the hills
In woods continuous, with nocturnal gloom
Still dusky, save where through some narrow cleft
The searching ray finds entrance ; or a shower
Of splendid atoms twinkles in the sun,
While the keen thrush the berried twig invades,
Or from the rimy boughs the ringdove breaks.
Close crowding to the roots the foxglove shuns
The peasant's weighty tread ; and rears its stems,
Summer's brown reliques, late with pendent bells
Reddening the wild, now wither'd and forlorn,
Fringed with dry fragments rustling in the breeze.
Thus o'er the warrior's urn while Victory bends

In monumental woe, his mighty lance
Sordid with dust, and blunt with cankering age,
High on the wall midst tatter'd ensigns hangs,
And mouldering trophies of its past renown.

Why gleams the axe? Why falls the verdant branch?
Falls it with emblematic green to deck
The fane, or in the cheerful window rear'd
The village grace; while man adoring learns
The wonders of his Saviour's birth, or hails
With festive gratitude the newborn year?
Still heavier sound the unremitted blows,
And ampler desolation strews the ground.
Call'd by the well-known echoes, that announce
To every herd throughout the adjacent lawns
Scatter'd the hour of food, when sylvan spoils
The shrivel'd herbage of the plain supply,
Hasten the deer: as when at farmyard gate
The noontide bell, swung long, and tinkling far,
The peasant bands expecting due repast
Summons from distant fields. The prickly leaves
Fearless they crop; then seize the slender shoots;
Then from the firmer branches strip the rind,

Not doom'd the schoolboy's viscous rods to arm,
And snare the antient tenants of the shade.
Behind, the children of the hamlet throng
With cold stiff fingers, where the stagnant blood
Purples the skin, the abandon'd boughs to drag
Homewards. In thought even now I see them bend
Loquacious o'er the evening hearth, and rub
Their smarting eyeballs, as they watch the smoke
Burst forth in puffs; while steams the bubbling sap,
And hisses in the half-extinguish'd fire.

Whether with leafy guard encircled rise
The boughs, still green; or bleak with horrent spray
Shiver the naked ranks; alike o'er all
Winter his petrifying sceptre waves,
Hurls from her throne the Vegetative Power;
Chains in its harden'd rind the trunk; with voice
Terrific shakes the branches; in the buds
Seals up the leaflets; and in every vein
Curdles the stagnant sap. Yet at thy name,
King of the tempests, though through all her realms
Creation shudders, and her feebl' tribes
Torpid and whelm'd in deathlike sleep surveys;

Time's active strength nor flags nor slumbers : Time,
Numb'd by no frosts, retarded by no storms,
Still speeds his never varied course, still swells
With days and months and years his journey'd store.
Nor shall his haste be slacken'd, till he gains
The peak of that vast mountain, up whose steep
Straining for ages he has toil'd ; and treads
Unconscious on the brink of the abyfs,
Thy gulph, Eternity, foredoom'd his grave,
'Takes one step more, and is for ever lost.
Thus when its sacred rest the Sabbath breathes,
Labour's tired hand, the unyoked ox, the earth
Safe from the share, repofes ; finks the din
Of commerce anchor'd in the crowded port;
Mute is the empty mart ; flumbers the rage
Of pleaders ; Juftice, with relenting brow,
Sheathes on the hallowed morn her fword ; a pause,
A folemn pause, all nature feems to feel,
Save in the frowning camp. War knows no reft ;
War owns no fabbath ; War, with impious toil
Unfpent, with blood unfated, to the fiends
Of vengeance ftill rebellows, ftill purfues

His

His work of death ; nor pauses, nor relents,
For laws divine, or fight of human woe.

Sunk in the vale, whose concave depth receives
The waters draining from these shelvy banks
When the shower beats, yon pool with pallid gleam
Betrays its icy covering. From the glades
Issuing in pensive files, and moving slow,
The cattle, all unwitting of the change,
To quench their customary thirst advance.
With wondering stare and fruitless search they trace
The solid margin : now bend low their heads
In act to drink ; now with fastidious nose
Snuffing the marble floor, and breathing loud,
From the cold touch withdraw. Awhile they stand
In disappointment mute ; with ponderous feet
Then bruise the surface : from the wood rebounds
Each stroke, forth gushes the imprison'd wave.

So when thy keel, adventurous MONK *, had plow'd
Hudson's

* Captain Monk was dispatched in the year 1619 by Christian IV. king of Denmark, to attempt the discovery of a north-east passage to China. He wintered on the shore of Hudson's Bay ;

Hudfon's dire freights ; when on the beach, convulsed
 With flock of floating isles and driving cliffs
 Rear'd in pellucid adamant, thy crew
 Listening the crash their wintry dwelling raised ;
 Nor juice of grape by southern suns matured,
 Nor fierce Geneva with internal fire
 Ardent the petrifying blast withstood.
 Bursting the swollen cask roar'd. Protruded pale
 From the staved ends the pillar'd ice amazed
 The thirsty mariners. The glassy draught
 Eager they hew with axes, punch with bars,
 Shiver with hammers, and o'er piny boughs
 Heap'd high the fragments in the caldron pile.
 Quick moves the hand, the labouring bellows pant ;

Bay ; and relates that the cold was so intense, that neither beer,
 wine, nor brandy could resist it ; but were frozen up, and the
 vessels which contained them were split into pieces : and that,
 before they could use the liquors, they were obliged to hew them
 with hatchets, and dissolve them by fire. The classical reader will
 recollect Virgil's description of a Scythian winter :

—cæduntque securibus humida vina.

The

The cheer'd flame glows beneath the brazen cave ;
On its hot sides the round drops hiss ; the flood
Slow-rising simmers ; o'er the sinking mass
Throng'd in close circle gleaming faces hang,
And half devour it with impatient eyes.

Through Winter's sylvan realms in devious course
Thus rove our steps. We linger, pleas'd to note
His mien peculiar. Deem we then the face
Of changeful seasons varied but to charm
The gazing eye, and sooth the vacant mind ?
Say, is not Nature's ample tome display'd,
Even to the careless wanderer in the field,
With moral purpose ? Wisdom's dictates pure,
Themes of momentous import, character'd
By more than human finger, every page
Discloses. He, who form'd this beauteous globe,
Studios amidst its brightest scenes has hung
Fit emblems of a perishable world
And all its transient glory. The full buds
Does Spring unfold ; and, thick as drops of dew
Spangling the grass, the purple bloom diffuse ?
Comes a chill blight, and bids the sanguine youth

Read

Read in its ravages a lore that tells
Of frustrate plans, and disappointed hopes.
Do Summer suns the mead with herbage load,
And tinge the ripening ear ? With sudden rage
Descends the thunderstorm ; the river swells
Impatient of controul ; and, while its waves
Devour the promised harvest, calls aloud
On man to tremble for his daily bread.
The faded leaves does Autumn scatter wide ;
Or Winter rend the desolated boughs,
And lay the fathers of the forest low ?
The blast that executes their fierce command
To man proclaims, " This earth is not thy home."
It bids him seek, and heaven the search will crown,
A more enduring dwelling-place ; the joys
Unutterable, which nor eye hath seen,
Nor ear hath heard, nor heart of man * conceived ;
Joys which Omnipotence itself prepares
For those who love their God ; joys then to ope
Their stores, when the last trump shall shake the skies ;

* 1 Cor. ii. 9.

And all the palm-crown'd sons of holiness,
With garments wash'd in their Redeemer's blood *,
Shout their hosannas round his throne ; and, join'd
With angels, and to angels equal made,
Bathe in the fount of everlasting bliss.

Do Seasons teach in vain ? Does Nature's voice
Sound in dull ears ? Does Truth, disclosed from heaven,
With useless toil on Nature's volume pour
New radiance ; and her sacred shafts behold
Bound unimpressive from the callous heart ?
Tremble, insensate triflers ! Tremble, mourn,
O race obdurate ! Ye that flight the love,
And mock the vengeance of eternal Power :
Love, on whose wonders raptur'd Angels gaze ;
Vengeance, in flames to shuddering Fiends reveal'd !
What yet remains ? The hour, that ends the joys
And wakes the throbs of guilt ; the hour, that brings
The unavailing sigh ; the fruitless wish
For longer space of trial ; the conscious pang
Of ruin self-induced, and mercy lost
For ever ; the blank horrors of despair !

* Rev. vii. 14.

So, warn'd of God, from cities long grown deaf
To sacred exhortation to the depth
Of mountain woods his sons the Patriarch led.
There with long-drawn and wide-extended line
He stretch'd the mighty keel and curved the ribs
Of that capacious vessel, doom'd to save
The wrecks of nature. Oft would gathering crowds
With stupid gaze the growing fabric watch,
Or point the taunting finger. He meanwhile,
Year after year, untired the task pursued ;
Till wonder ceased to mark his toil, nor scorn
Deign'd to deride him more. One morn, the heavens
Grew dark with wings ; earth with unnumber'd steps
Sounded ; bird, beast, in long procession fought
Their destined refuge. With his kindred train
The builder next ascended. From the gloom
Of congregating clouds stretch'd forth, a Hand
The entrance clos'd. Then darkness cover'd all,
Deathlike, unfunn'd, as though primeval night
Resumed her empire. Torrents from the skies
Plunged prone in solid downfall. Earth her depths
Burst. Thronging on the summits of the hills,
As seamen crowded on the mainmast's top

While at each billow deeper sinks the ship
And deeper, nations their despairing eyes
Roll'd round ; from every furge, in lessening orb
They shrunk ; their arms uplifted ; stretch'd their necks
Above the rising waves, and shriek'd their last.

F I N I S.

